In The Name Of Allah,
The Beneficent, The Merciful

The Aesthetics of ‘Ashura

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A Descriptive Aesthetic Study of Al-Taf Epic Incident Based on the Noble Quran, the Sunna, History as well as the Study of the Perceptual Knowledge (Aesthetics)

Researched and Written By
Saiyed Nabil Al-Hasani

Translated By
Haydar Najee Al-Lami

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Iraq : Holy Karbala - The Holy Shrine of Imam Hussain (AS)
Intellectual and Cultural Affairs Department
Tel: 326499
www. imamhussain-lib.com
E-mail: info@imamhussain-lib.com

“I see nonthing but beauty,…”

Lady Zainab (PBUH)

Acknowledgment

When I was writing these lines, I was at a loss to whether dedicate this book to the symbol of gracefulness of the Prophet (PBUH) or to the adornment of her father.

So, I was inclining my head, sweating and trembling all over as I stood shamefaced for my insignificant offering not worthy of someone who was the adornment of her father, who was the lady among her cousins and her children, and who perfectly resembled her grandmother, the great Khadija (PBUH); it is, of course, enough to mention her name and remind everyone of her prestigious status.

At this point, a line of poetry came to my mind which says:

This is Zainab, whose courtyard

Was where to make a stop.

Here I said to myself: By God, her courtyard indeed was and still is the place to make a stop, and then I held her doorknob and said:

This is Zainab and her generous hands

Are loaded at all times with gracefulness

Dear Madam, I am your stray servant and I have come with a present knowing that I have failed to serve you well, but I also know that it is not in your generous nature to reject the poor seeking your kindness. Thus, I do hope that you accept this small and humble present.

Your servant and son, Nabil

Introduction of the Department

Praise be to Allah Who bestowed upon us the blessing of knowledge, and peace be upon the Most Honorable Prophet and Messenger, Abul-Qasim, Mohammad, and pure people of his kindred.

It is such a pleasure to the Department of Intellectual and Cultural Affairs to contribute into supporting the Islamic library with intellectual writings, which will be a strong push in dissemination of Islamic culture, especially the Husseini culture. Therefore, we are very delighted to present our eighth publication, namely “The Aesthetics of ‘Ashura”, that highlights the graceful and beautiful images appeared in ‘Ashura of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and that enlightens the readers about those luminous aspects of the Tenth of Muharram, widely known as ‘Ashura.

In fact, there have been countless and generous efforts in making of this valuable book, from proofreading, typing and revising to printing and publishing, the fact that obliges me to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Secretariat of the Husseini Holy Shrine represented by its Secretary, Sheikh Abdul-Mahdi Al-Karbalaee, who has showed his absolute commitment in supporting the intellectual and cultural movement carried out by the Department of Intellectual and Cultural Affairs in the Holy Husseini Shrine. I would also like to express my gratitude and absolute support to the author who paid countless efforts into writing this precious book.

Sheikh Ali Al-Fatlawi

Head of the Department of Intellectual and Cultural Affairs

Introduction of the Author

When someone stands in front of a collection of books and begins reading the titles in order to choose what suits their intellectual and cultural orientations, and as soon as they see a title that has the word ‘Ashura, the very first thing that comes to the mind is a picture full of agony, sorrow and melancholy.

The reason is that the reality of ‘Ashura, with all its tragic and calamitous events, simply forces upon us to sympathy with the offspring and companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), as a group of evil people inflicted a horrifying massacre on Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) and their followers; they did not even spare women and children. As a matter of fact, the most horrible part of this picture is the way they killed the grandson of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), Imam Hussein (PBUH), along with his offspring and followers (PBUT).

Now, this sorrowful and painful event has been imprinted in people’s minds and preoccupied a lot of readers, researchers and scholars since then, so much so that it casted a gloomy shadow on people’s lives and only set ablaze to their feelings and emotions rather than shedding light on the images of life and many other intellectual concepts the epic of ‘Ashura is filled with.

Accordingly, many researches that speak about ‘Ashura and that avoid indulging into its tragic events either derive their research materials from the causes and introductions leading to ‘Ashura or they concern themselves with the outcomes of this epic incident.

In fact, ‘Ashura is a fundamental milestone of the human

civilization through which the human intellect makes progress; it is this stream that gives life its freshness and its ability to shine and thrive. It is truly the inspiration that kindles the minds of thinkers and reformers in reinforcing life with the essential underpinnings in order to build a decent and safe life away from perversions.

Therefore, ‘Ashura, with all its agony, sorrow, tragedies and calamities, has always been that wide gate to a civilized life through which one can find everything they need in relation to intellect, values, facts, proofs and notions such as aesthetics and so on.

In view of that, ‘Ashura is filled with beauty, whether sensed by sight or insight, despite the pain and grief and sorrow; this is because it has – as we mentioned earlier – everything related to intellect although many might not be able to notice its beauty and grace.

We could manage, through doing researches, to find the eye-catching, breathtaking, heart-warming and mind-boggling aspects of aesthetics in ‘Ashura that would inflame our emotions and make us examine in detail those beautiful and impressive scenes for a very long time.

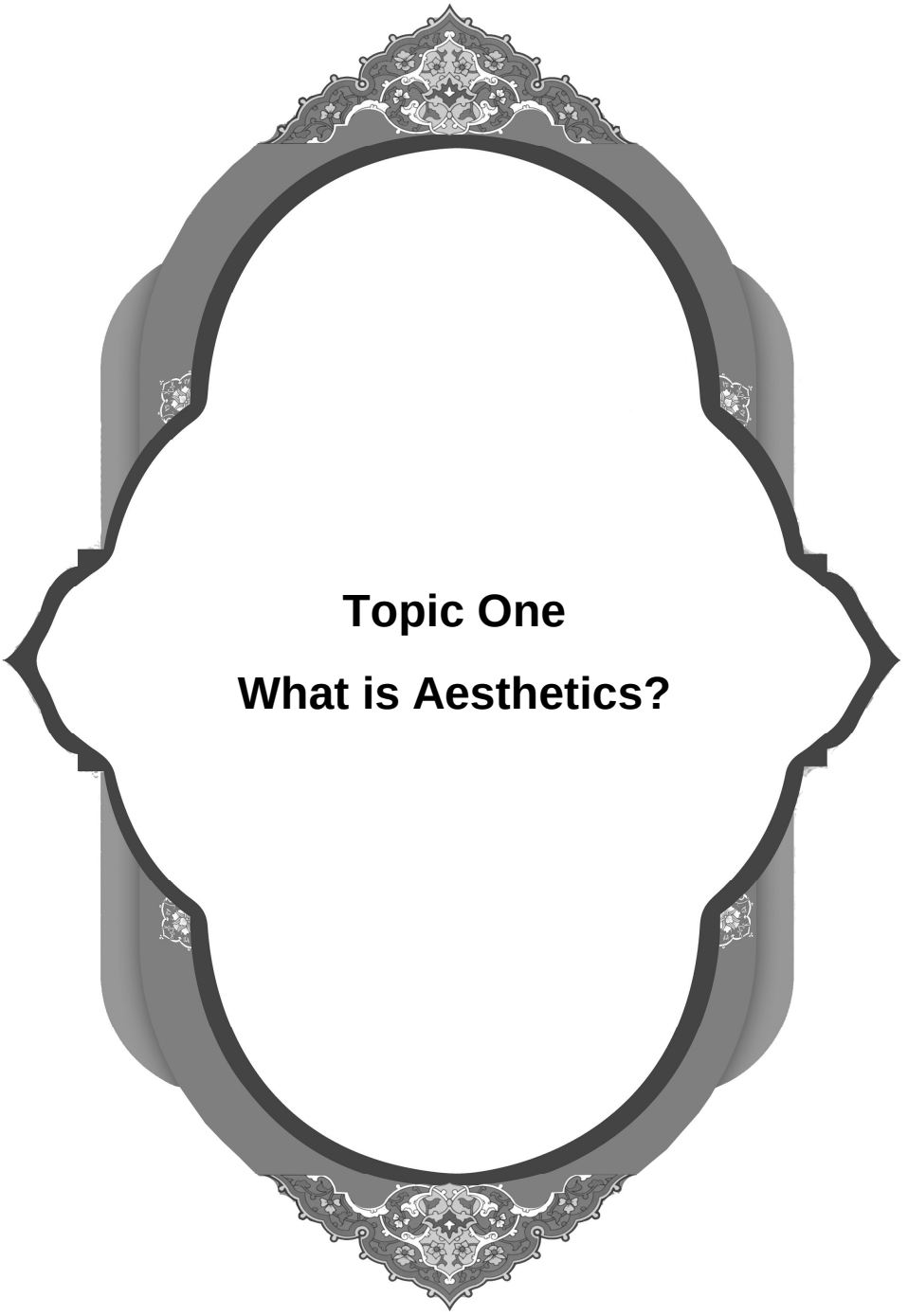
There are countless scenes in which the pure beauty and gracefulness of those purified figures was the center of attention to all the beholders, including the enemies. There are also countless scenes in which the beauty of moral values and mental merits are manifested to those gifted with intellect and insight. Thus, such scenes illuminated their hearts and paved their way.

In order for this research to be the mirror that reflects this beauty to the readers’ hearts and minds, we had to look for aesthetic scenes on the day of ‘Ashura among those noble figures (PBUT) – through the beauty of their faces and their bodies – in addition to intellectual scenes in life embodied in the heroes of ‘Ashura, starting from the night of the tenth of Muharram and ending with the attitude of Lady Zainab (PBUH) in regard to all the aesthetic components of ‘Ashura which indeed inspired my own attitude of aesthetics as the author of this book.

Success is granted by the Almighty Allah.

Saiyed Nabil Qaddori Hasan Al-Hasani

2007 AD – 1428 AH



Topic One

What is Aesthetics?

Before we learn about the characteristics of aesthetics and its manifestations on the day of ‘Ashura through different aspects of the tragedy of Karbala, we first need to learn about aesthetics, its definition, concept and subject matters in order to deduce our vision of aesthetics in regard to ‘Ashura.

First issue: the definition and concept of aesthetics

It is quite clear to the readers that there are aspects in human creation that have always occupied philosophers’ and thinkers’ minds, and one of the most important aspects is aesthetics. There have been so many questions raised about this issue that we had to choose it as the title for this section of our research.

Raising questions about the idea of beauty in itself is a huge issue that reflects one of the deep and complex dilemmas mankind had to face over history. We already know about a large number of prominent figures such as philosophers, intellectuals, scientists and artists that exerted themselves in order to find a convincing answer to this question; they worked hard to come up with a form of method or approach to solve the intellectual problems of life, and beauty was one of the important problematic issues in a philosophical system established by any philosopher.

Despite the fact that the there are countless number of studies and researches talking about aesthetics, yet the problem almost remained without any reliable solutions looking at the multiplicity of answers and their contradiction. Every philosopher claims that they have the true answer about the meaning of beauty and its nature as they provide many arguments and proofs in order to support their

answer. There are a lot of researches on aesthetics with a variety of conflicting views so much that one finds himself bewildered in the midst of a huge amount of ideas and theories, and each has its own supporting arguments and refuting criticism at one and the same time.

It is no surprise that William Durant came to the realization that "books with heaviest shadows in the world are those written about aesthetics and that the solid bones of Metaphysics tremble and it is terrified when beauty reaches its right place through seeking wisdom"[1].

The difficulty of this question probably comes from the fact that philosophers and thinkers establish their views and understanding of aesthetics or beauty on realism and idealism, yet each has its own approach to knowledge in regard to the universe, physics, society as well as aesthetics. Therefore, we have the objective approach and the subjective approach.

The objective approach: the supporters of this view say that aesthetics is independent and it exists outside the individual as an objective phenomenon. Therefore, it has its own outside presence and independent entity which gives emphasis to the liberation of aesthetics as a concept from personal disposition.

The objective approach goes back to one of the oldest Greek philosophers, Democritus, who believed that beauty has an objective basis in the world and that the essence of beauty is about systematic structure, proportions, harmony among segments and the correct mathematic percentages.

Moreover, Plato gave a description about the journey the soul makes in pursuit of beauty in the sense that individuals begins by appreciating a form of beauty and then move to the next stage where they appreciate a number of forms of beauty, and finally they appreciate the abstract form of beauty. In order to reach this point where we can see beauty in everything, we need to work hard and study the world of beauty carefully; this again allows the light into our human souls and only then we can see that everything is beautiful.

Aristotle also considered aesthetics a quality which has an

1 Falsafat Al-Fan Wa Al-Jamaal, 279-280.

objective outside existence, that is, the mind realizes beauty with certain objective characteristics in an outside subject matter or in the relationships between its segments due to its reliance on a particular form and a specific pattern; some of the most important characteristics of aesthetics are arrangement, proportionality, clearness, finality, unity and diversity.

The subjective approach: this doctrine was established as a response to the extreme views in portraying and evaluating beauty. We learned that the objective view considered beauty a corporeal quality, which is one form of something or an object that is beautiful, however the subjective view merely considered beauty a state of mind and not a quality in an object which is isolated from our understanding of it.

Accordingly, the supporters of the subjective approach considered aesthetics a psychological phenomenon and a personal experience and that any taste-based judgment does not reflect the quality of a beautiful object, but it in fact reflects the psychological state of human beings.

Therefore, beauty can resemble light inside the human heart as it takes pleasure in tasting beauty which is a relative matter associated with human character and his social, cultural and psychological disposition.

Plato attributed the external beauty of objects to an internal and spiritual beauty.

Kant also considered that the sense of beauty stems from our soul and spirit and not from nature or the outside matter.

Moreover, Hegel realized that the beauty in nature is only manifested as a reflection of the mental beauty.

Geoffroy ascribed every sense of beauty to a sense of internal strength[1].

At this point, another doctrine or approach arose as philosophers tried to combine the first view and the second view of realizing and understanding beauty, and therefore, they came up with “the objective-subjective doctrine”.

Furthermore, beauty is one of the three values that complete the

1 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, Mohammad Sa’eed Hassan & Kholoud Badr, p22.

formation of a normal human being. These values, namely rightness, goodness, and beauty, are firmly connected to one another as they pave the way for the mind and reason in order to establish a decent life.

These three values cannot be, in any way, separated in the sense that they are overlapped in meaning because it takes a deep insight which is able to determine the domain of each of these values.

The personality of a normal person is actually is the result of cooperation of his or her multiple natural gifts such as thinking, will and sense. Now, each of these gifts or natural endowments is specifically linked to one of the three values; the gift of thinking is linked to the truth, the gift of will to goodness and the gift of sense to beauty.

As a matter of fact, these three gifts of perception are deeply entrenched inside human beings as they are, in a way or another, subject to their nature and their psychological or mental condition. For instance, in case of distress and weakness in perception, their judgment is subject to error and vice versa.

Consequently, realizing these values and evaluating or judging them is definitely affected by one's personal state in one way or another. The personal state of a person is the main factor that influences in perception of values he or she comes across.

Kant said: beauty is nothing if separated from our senses.

Plato also said: the best proof to that is when the one who sees and the object seen are correlated equally or at least proportionally so that beauty would be seen.

Thus, we have to go back to the definition of beauty and the concept of beauty in order to learn what philosophers and thinkers said about these ideas and views.

A – The definition of aesthetics

There is no doubt that aesthetics preoccupied a great number of philosophers, intellectuals and artists and that resulted in a number of definitions for aesthetics. Baumgarten (1714 – 1762) was the first to differentiate between aesthetics and other human sciences; he used the word, "Aesthetgue", to refer to the study of the idea of

beauty. Historically speaking, this word has a Greek origin as it stemmed from the Greek word, “Aisthesi”, and it was used to refer to the knowledge that concerned itself with feelings related to beautiful objects as well as composing standards and principles that appreciate beauty[1].

Furthermore, Baumgarten attempted to set a form of logic for the beauty of feeling similar to the Aristotelian formal logic in regard to thought or intellect. His goal was to distinguish between the rightness, goodness and beauty, as each of these values has its own domain.

Accordingly, knowledge, manner and sense are perfections that can be achieved through rightness, goodness and beauty respectively; this perfection is the pivot around which aesthetics rotates as the logic for the vague corporeal relationship[2].

In this book, we will try to present our point of view in regard to the perfection images of Al-Taf epic incident through which rightness, goodness and beauty manifested themselves within various aesthetic images.

We also decided to discuss all the definitions of aesthetics provided by philosophers rather than limiting ourselves to only one view. This is because each definition is the result of a different philosophical vision.

As a matter of fact, aesthetics is not only limited to philosophical thinking about art, in the sense that the scope covered by aesthetics has to do with feelings and emotions with the condition of perfection for this knowledge, which is beauty in itself.

This was the view held by Kant in his book, “Critique of Judgment”, as he divided aesthetics into two parts:

1 . A theory on beauty and majesty.

2 . A research on the nature of fine arts.

A. Herbert Read’s Definition

Many intellectuals lean toward adopting the definition offered by Herbert Read in regard to beauty as it is considered one of the most

1 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p14.

2 Falsafat Al-Fan Wa Al-Jamaal, Hamid Sarmak, 272.

important definitions about aesthetics. He says: “It is the unity of formal relations between the things perceived by our senses”.

Herbert Read emphasized on the idea that the sense of beauty is characterized by fluctuation over time and space, that is, what is beautiful at one time might be considered ugly at another time.

Moreover, the sense of beauty is the basic factor upon which the artistic activity is founded, and it is marked by peculiarity in its relative dimensions. It also has specific historical significance which goes back to the Greek who believed that god encompasses all human beauty, and that he is the lofty and perfect example of humanity.

In view of that, the concept of beauty has changed over ages, and in the modern time, it distanced itself from miraculous and ideal actions, as it associated itself with the transformation of society, scientific discoveries and new technologies[1].

B. Definition of aesthetics according to Greek philosophers

Greek philosophers used phrases related to quantity and space to define beauty.

They saw the beauty of music in the harmony of sounds and the beauty of art in harmony of proportions[2].

This was referred to in the topical trend statement which was actually adopted by the Greek philosophers in their interpretation of beauty.

C. Definition of aesthetics according to the Arabs

It is noteworthy that the Arabs, in the past and present, have used words and idioms in their literary works that are indicative of beauty and its penetration into the Arab individuals in the desert or the city.

The fact that Arab poets used the lyrical style in the opening of their poems, whether it was satire, elegy, epic, didactic poetry, etc., emphasizes on the necessity for them to crown their poetry through expressing their sense enjoyment and harmony in regard to beauty.

“After all, what distinguishes beauty is that it is about appreciating a value, as it is a positive perception to the person perceiving it. Also,

1 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p17.
2 Ibid.

it helps letting out the internal joy to describe an external thing as if they become one entity. Therefore, realizing beauty is a value we add to real things from our perfect spiritual models and that realizing beauty is the beginning for every study of beauty"[1].

This is what we are seeking in this study on 'Ashura, i.e. realizing the numerous values of 'Ashura embodied in the perfect merits revolved around Imam Hussein Bin Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUT). Despite all the evil that was gathered against him, Imam Hussein (PBUH) went on to put emphasis on high values such as righteousness, goodness, justice and freedom and to fill the darkened human souls with the light of beauty and its magnificent majesty.

B – The concept of aesthetics

Philosophers and intellectuals were not able to agree on a comprehensive and inclusive definition about aesthetics, and this is also true about finding one concept. Therefore, they offered a number of definitions to the concept of beauty. Some of these definitions are:

1. It is the science that studies the idea of beauty, its standards and theories.
2. It is the science that studies human aesthetic relations with reality as well as the highest level of these relations, namely art.
3. It is the science that studies the general laws of the evolution of human aesthetic relations with reality, especially n regard to art as a distinguished form of social consciousness.
4. It is the science that studies beauty, taste and fine arts; it focuses on clarifying the idea of beauty as a distinctive feature in art works and it sets sound principles that lie behind the aesthetic judgments[2].

I believe that beauty is so complicated that we cannot put rules, laws, mechanisms or approaches for it, as it is a material like other kinds of sciences and their branches that one need to obtain through deliberation and comprehension. This is due to the fact that beauty is a mixture of instinct, sense, taste and perception, which are the basics for creating the human soul and defining his identity.

1 Moqaddama Fi 'Ilm Al-Jamaal, p16.
2 Moqaddama Fi 'Ilm Al-Jamaal, p15.

Second issue: aesthetics between meaning and content

A – The meaning of aesthetics

In order to know the meaning of aesthetics, we must refer to Baumgarten who gave the study of the idea of beauty the name, “Aesthetgue” or “aesthetics”, and also specified a place for it within the branches of philosophy[1].

Aesthetics used to be a branch of philosophy which is specifically concerned with the study of sense and sentiment. Accordingly, aesthetics was presented as “the study of the aesthetic sense or the aesthetic sentiment”, “the study of perceptual knowledge” or “the study of principles or images of sensory perception”[2].

In view of that, I found that the tragedy of Karbala is filled with images of sensory perception and aesthetic sense so much that it seemed to me that it is – despite all the calamities and sufferings – one of the most fertile places in producing strongest aesthetic images; this fascinating beauty prevented some people from taking the path of dark evil and made them talk in bewilderment to themselves, “his shining face kept me from killing him”.

Therefore, I learned that the study of ‘Ashura from the aesthetic view provides a new perspective to its beholders and removes their worries and concerns accumulated due to the practices of oppressors and hypocrites that tried to weaken the aesthetic sense and conceal the perceptual knowledge linked to Prophet Mohammed and his descendants (PBUH) who filled the universe with beauty.

1 Moojaz Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p10, cited from Al-Osos Al-Nafsiya Lil-Ibda’ Al-Fanni, Dr. Mostafa Sweif.

2 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p14.

B – The content of aesthetics

The study of perceptual knowledge or what is known as "aesthetics" has certain content which is concerned a specific issue like any other sciences that are founded to seek and serve a specific purpose.

Hence, "aesthetics at first was founded to concentrate on issues such as perceptual knowledge and its perfection-based conditions. This is because this type of knowledge is acquired through perception, and when we have this knowledge, we see beauty in everything, therefore the idea of ugliness is the lack of this knowledge.

The base in this practice is to recognize the concepts as well as the nature of things; this is as far as the beauty of things or substance is excluded from this field and warning is given on mixing it with the beauty of knowledge. As we know, knowledge is initially an abstract practice that has nothing to do with indications and qualities except when it comes to detecting the basic and essential nature of things.

Accordingly, aesthetics must be looking into the beauty of the inner self, and the beauty of meaning, besides the beauty of arts. This was actually the view adopted by Christian Wolff who also referred to the higher powers and lower powers of knowledge, in the sense that the higher powers are studied within the domain of logic and lower powers are studied within the domain of sensory perception. Moreover, he placed the evaluation of human sensory perception with the specialty of aesthetics"[1].

It is quite clear to close readers of the philosophers' viewpoints, who were concerned with aesthetics, that they were short-sighted in their approach to art as a material that can be subject to sensory and cognitive standards and that its beauty can be deducted according to certain appropriate rules by skillful people; this, of course, means the sense of beauty is limited to artists and that only they are capable of identifying beautiful aspects in any artwork and the same goes for the ugly aspects of that same artwork.

In view of that, those who have no knowledge of the sensory rules

1 Falsafat Al-Fan Wa Al-Jamaal, 274.

and principles needed for identifying the beautiful aspects in a work of art cannot perceive or understand its beautiful aspects.

As a matter of fact, there are still serious attempts made in order to find a concept for beauty or a comprehensive definition that can bring all the philosophical and intellectual views together, especially when human beings innately have the aesthetic sentiment in the sense that it is part and parcel of their creation and personality.

This is the reason why sculptors or painters can bring out the inner beauty through using certain available tools and applying them on certain surfaces; every individual has this ability to express their version of beauty via their artworks, their ideas, or their moral perfection.

Therefore, some philosophers persistently tried to find an answer to this huge number of viewpoints on aesthetics, and the German philosopher, Leibniz, came to this conclusion that beauty is based on knowledge and its components through two approaches, as each has its own cognitive task.

The first is the mental approach through which we learn the truth and perfection in the world.

The second is the physical approach which helps us to perceive beauty through emotions and feelings that we find in an image, whether it is complete or incomplete[1].

Hence, I learned through this study that ‘Ashura, as a work of God, has indeed combined these two approaches which can lead mankind to knowledge, i.e. the mental approach and physical approach.

The event of ‘Ashura is filled with aesthetic images that carry emotions, feelings, righteousness and goodness, and beholders can come in direct contact with all this beauty and perceive them mentally and physically; this can also lead to a spiritual harmony so much so that we become captivated by that beauty.

1 Falsafat Al-Fan Wa Al-Jamaal, Hamid Sarmak, 281.

Third issue: aesthetics in language

Al-Jawhari said: Jamaal (Beauty) is the state or quality of being Jameel (beautiful); we say “Jamola” (he became beautiful or handsome). A man is “Jameel” (handsome) and a woman is “Jameela” or “Jamlaa” (beautiful).

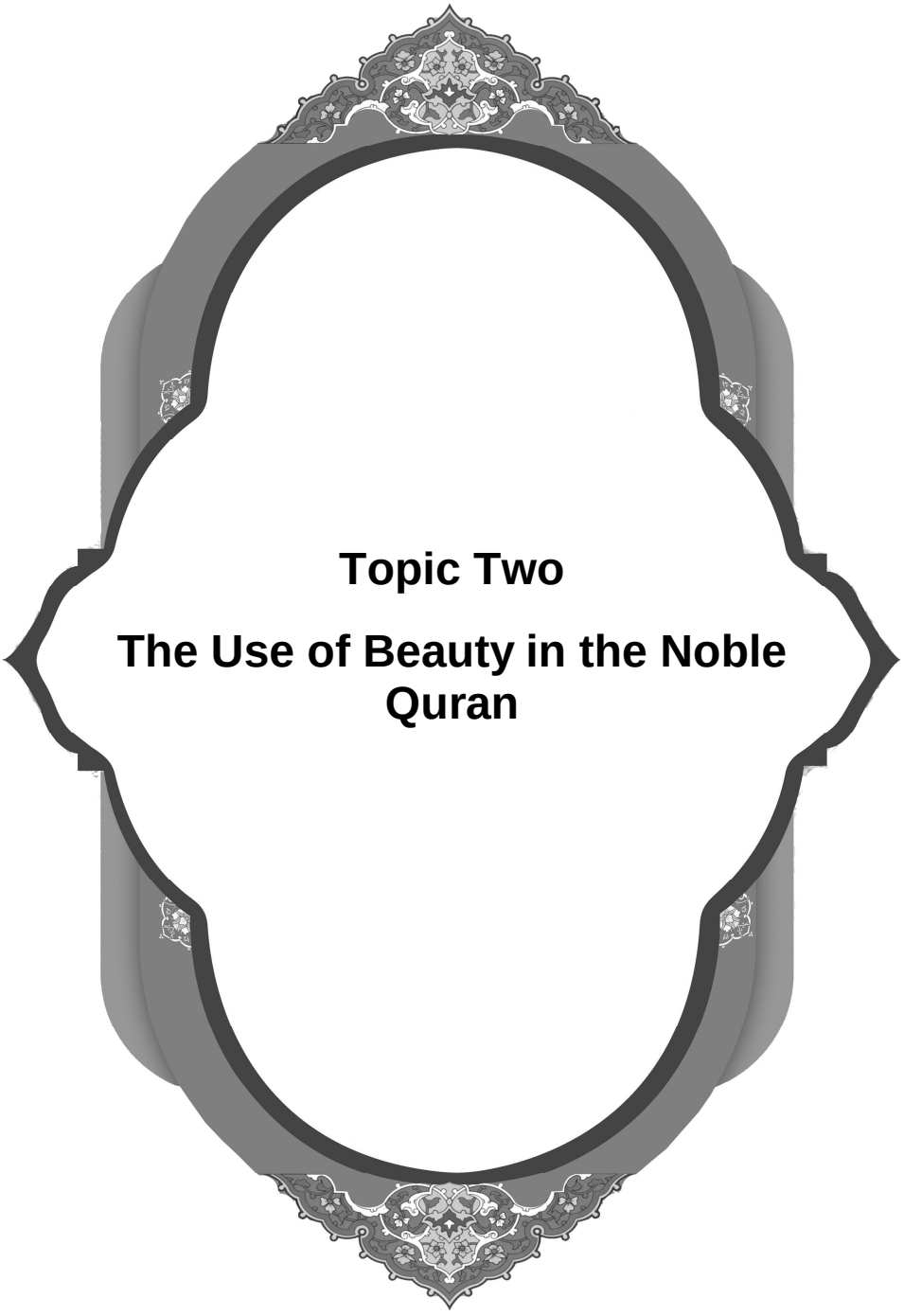
“Jommal” means more beautiful.

“Mojamala” means courtesy or good manners.

“Jammalaho” means to embellish or to beautify; “Tajammol” is to apply cosmetics[1].

Bin Saiyeda also said: Jamaal (Beauty) is in action and in nature[2].

1 Al-Sihah, Al-Jawhari, p1662-1663.
2 Lisan Al-‘Arab, Bin Mandhour, v11, p126.



Topic Two

The Use of Beauty in the Noble Quran

In fact, the word, beauty, is mentioned in four different verses of the Noble Quran. These verses are concerned with domestic, social and political affairs of the Islamic community. We shall discuss each one of them in this chapter:

First issue: the word, beauty, in family relations

The Noble Quran approached the family affairs in two methods; the first method dealt with the domestic life of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and the second method dealt with the domestic life of every individual Muslim.

First method: the aesthetic sense of granting the wives of the Prophet (PBUH) the choice

The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

> *(O Prophet! Say to your wives: If you desire this world's life and its adornment, then come, I will give you a provision and allow you to depart a goodly departing۞And if you desire Allah and His Apostle and the latter abode, then surely Allah has prepared for the doers of good among you a mighty reward)*[1].

In this Holy Verse, we learn that the choice offered in the Noble Quran to the wives of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) revolves around beauty. The sense of beauty, however, is different here, that is, the beauty of the domestic life in the house of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) is based on perfection, contentment, and chastity as well as looking to the afterlife.

For this reason, beauty outside the house of the Prophet (PBUH) is based on looking to this life and its adornments. In the house of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), however, the hearts are interested in

1 33.28-29

the afterlife.

Since the Almighty Allah would *(impose upon no soul a duty but to the extent of its capacity)*, He granted them the freedom to choose; in case they could not endure contentment, chastity and the exertion of worship, they had the option to depart in order to pursue a comfortable and luxurious life.

Even when a wife departed the Prophet (PBUH), this did not affect her dowry in any way; this is because the Almighty Allah is beautiful and loves beauty, He accepts no less than beautiful things for His Messenger (PBUH).

Now, the reason for the revelation of this Holy Verse was "that 'Aisha asked the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) for the transient things of this world, possibly an increase in expense or something similar, therefore the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) secluded himself from his wives for a month"[1].

Al-Siouti reported that Bin Sa'd said: "The women of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said to him: No woman has dowry as precious as ours. The Almighty Allah here commanded His Prophet (PBUH) to seclude himself from his wives, therefore he secluded himself from them for twenty nine days, and then He commanded him to give them the choice"[2].

He also reported that Imam Hasan (PBUH) said: "God commanded him to give them the choice between this life and the afterlife, between Heaven and Hell"[3].

Qatada ascribed the revelation of this Holy Verse to: "the jealousy shown by 'Aisha"[4].

It was also reported that they said: "You probably think that if you divorce us, we cannot find another spouse among our people"[5]. For that reason, the Almighty God offered them the option between their current place with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) or separating

1 Tafsir Jami' Al-Bayan, Al-Tabari, v21, p188.
2 Tafsir Al-Dor Al-Manthour, v5, p195.
3 Al-Dor Al-Manthour, v5, p195. Takhrij Al-Ahadith Wa Al-Athaar, Al-Zaila'i, v3, p105.
4 Al-Moharrir Al-Wajiz, Bin 'Atiya Al-Andolosi, p380. Tafsir Al-Dor Al-Manthour, v5, p195.
5 Al-Amthal Fi Tafsir Al-Quran, Nasir Makarim Al-Shirazi, v3, p227.

themselves from him, yet retaining the rights to their dowries[1] or "a goodly departing" as mentioned in the Holy Verse.

Now, we can see the beauty of codifying the domestic relations in the above Holy Verse. The endurance of a family is represented in the understanding that a wife shows toward her husband and his position in the society.

The wife, therefore, has to deal with this situation and way of life. Otherwise, she is given the option to leave him so that a suitable woman would fill her place and appreciate her husband's situation. Now, just imagine that this is not any husband but the Seal of the Prophets and the Messengers (PBUH).

Second method: the aesthetic sense of preserving the marital relations

The Quranic discourse on preserving the personal rights within the families in the Muslim community is crystal clear in this following Holy Verse:

> *(O you who believe! when you marry the believing women, then divorce them before you touch them, you have in their case no term which you should reckon; so make some provision for them and send them forth a goodly sending forth)*[2].

This is the most beautiful way of treating the emotions and feelings of a woman, as she can decide to depart her husband if she does not find any agreements with her husband, and so can he. This way women can no more be exploited and deprived of their rights or even prevented from other men.

Therefore, the Noble Quran offered women "a goodly departing" and they could still return to their husbands; this beautiful treatment in their separation may lead the both sides to reconsider going back to each other.

This, furthermore, reflects the humane and compassionate aspect of Islamic law in dealing with human emotions and feelings, especially when it comes to domestic disputes that might lead to separation; here lies the beauty of Islam in regard to domestic affairs.

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1 Majma' Al-Bayan, Al-Tabarsi, v8, p152. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v22, p174.
2 33.49

Second issue: the word, beauty, in social treatment

Regarding the sociopolitical aspect, the Noble Quran offers a practical example to deal with the tyrants; the Almighty Allah addresses the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) in this Holy Verse:

(Therefore endure with a goodly patience)[1].

He asks the Prophet (PBUH) to show endurance towards the unbelievers and the hypocrites who live within the Muslim community; they tried to refute what Al-Mostafa (PBUH) brought, particularly in regard to Imamate and the succession of Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH). The Noble Traditions explaining the reason for the revelation of this Holy Verse clearly indicate this fact[2].

Moreover, the context of the Holy Verses preceding the above

1 70.5

2 Al-Kafi, Sheikh Al-Kolaini – May God bless his soul, v1, p422. Sharh Al-Akhbar, Al-Qadhi Al-No'man Al-Maghribi, v1, p241. Al-Taraef, Bin Tawous, p152. Al-Fadhael, Bin Shazan, p84. Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr, v2, p167. Sirat Al-Mostaqim, Ali Bin Younis Al-'Ameli, v1, p313. Tafsir Al-Forat, Al-Koufi, p503. Al-Dor Al-Nadheem, Bin Hatem Al-'Ameli, p314. Minhaj Al-Salehin, Sheikh Waheed Al-Khorasani, v1, p172. 'Oyoun Al-Mo'jizat, Hussein Bin Al-Wahhab, p14. Al-Arba'oun Hadith, Montajab Al-Din Bin Babawaih, p84. Al-Sawarim Al-Mohriqa, Al-Tastari, p79. Holyat Al-Abrar, Al-Bahrani, v2, p124. Al-Mostadrak, Al-Hakim Al-Naisabouri, v2, p502, Revised by Al-Mar'ashli. Nadhm Dorar Al-Samtain, Al-Zarandi Al-Hanafi, p93. Faidh Al-Qadeer, Al-Manawi, v6, p383. Khasaes Al-Wahi, Bin Al-Batriq, p92. Tafsir Al-Qortobi, v18, p279. Al-Fosoul Al-Mohimma, Bin Al-Sabbagh Al-Maliki, v1, p244. Al-Sira Al-Halabiya, v3, p337.

Holy Verse tells us that there is a sense of daring and challenge in what the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) calls for. The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

> *(One demanding, demanded the chastisement which must befall۞The unbelievers, there is none to avert it۞From Allah, the Lord of the ways of Ascent۞To Him ascend the angels and the Spirit in a day the measure of which is fifty thousand years۞Therefore endure with a goodly patience)*[1].

'Allama Al-Tabatabai said: When the demand was raised about torture with obstinacy and arrogance which was actually difficult to tolerate, the Almighty Allah commanded the Prophet (PBUH) to be patient and described his patience as beautiful – the Quranic words in Arabic are "Sabr Jamil" meaning "beautiful patience". In other words, when patience or endurance is free from restlessness and complaint, it becomes goodly or beautiful patience. For that reason, the day carrying torture was close[2].

Despite the pain caused by the unbelievers and the hypocrites, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) managed to live with them in the one same community; he faced them with "beautiful patience" only to please the Allah Almighty Allah.

1 70.1-5
2 Tafsir Al-Mizan, Sourat Al-Ma'arij, v20, p8.

Third issue: the word, beauty, in political reforms

The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

> *(And bear patiently what they say and avoid them with a becoming avoidance)*[1].

Linguistically speaking, politics is doing what is good for something[2].

The Noble Quran here shows the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) how to deal with those deceitful people and commands him to be patient and "avoid them with a becoming avoidance" (the Arabic words, Hajr Jamil, literally mean depart them beautifully).

Now, the verb "to avoid" (Hajara) means "to depart", "to abandon" or "to ignore". Therefore, the context of the Holy Verse in dealing with the opposition becomes "to avoid them and to accept them, but do not reward them and entrust them to the Almighty Allah"[3].

Regarding the political aspect, the Noble Quran instructs the Prophet (PBUH) about dealing with the wrongdoers within the community due to the authority he is invested with as the ruler and the Imam.

If this authority is given in correspondence to people's rights, then pardon is apparently in circulation as also a right to pardon on his part. As for the rights of the Almighty Allah, there are numerous Holy Verses and Traditions in regard to pardon and forgiveness, and if we

1 73.10
2 Lisan Al-'Arab, Bin Mandhour, v6, p108.
3 Bihar Al-Anwar, v9, p165.

look at the life history of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and Imam Ali (PBUH) and others, we can see the possibility of pardoning concerning these rights by the rulers if they see fit[1].

The following Holy Verses are some those Holy Verses that are concerned with the principles of ruling the Ummah (Islamic community). The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

> *(But on account of their breaking their covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard; they altered the words from their places and they neglected a portion of what they were reminded of; and you shall always discover treachery in them excepting a few of them; so pardon them and turn away; surely Allah loves those who do good to others)[2].*
>
> *(Take to forgiveness and enjoin good and turn aside from the ignorant)[3].*
>
> *(Repel evil by what is best; We know best what they describe)[4].*

Sheikh Al-Kolaini – May God bless his soul – reported from Zarara that Abu Jafar (PBUH) said:

> *"The Jewish woman that poisoned the sheep of the Prophet (PBUH) was brought to him, as he said to her: What made you do that? She said: I thought if he was a prophet, it would not harm him, but if he was a king, I would spare people his trouble. Here, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) pardoned her"[5].*

Once again, the Prophet (PBUH) gives those politicians in power a lesson on true leadership and the way they should deal with people. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) offers a unique example in forgiveness and endurance with the wrongdoers. This is, of course, "an indication of the necessity to have patience against maltreatment, especially when you are calling for the religion. This is in addition to having best morals and leniency in order to get as close as possible to the answer"[6].

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1 Dirasaat Fi Wilayat Al-Faqeeh Wa Fiqh Al-Dawla Al-Islamiya, Sheikh Al-Montazari, p397.

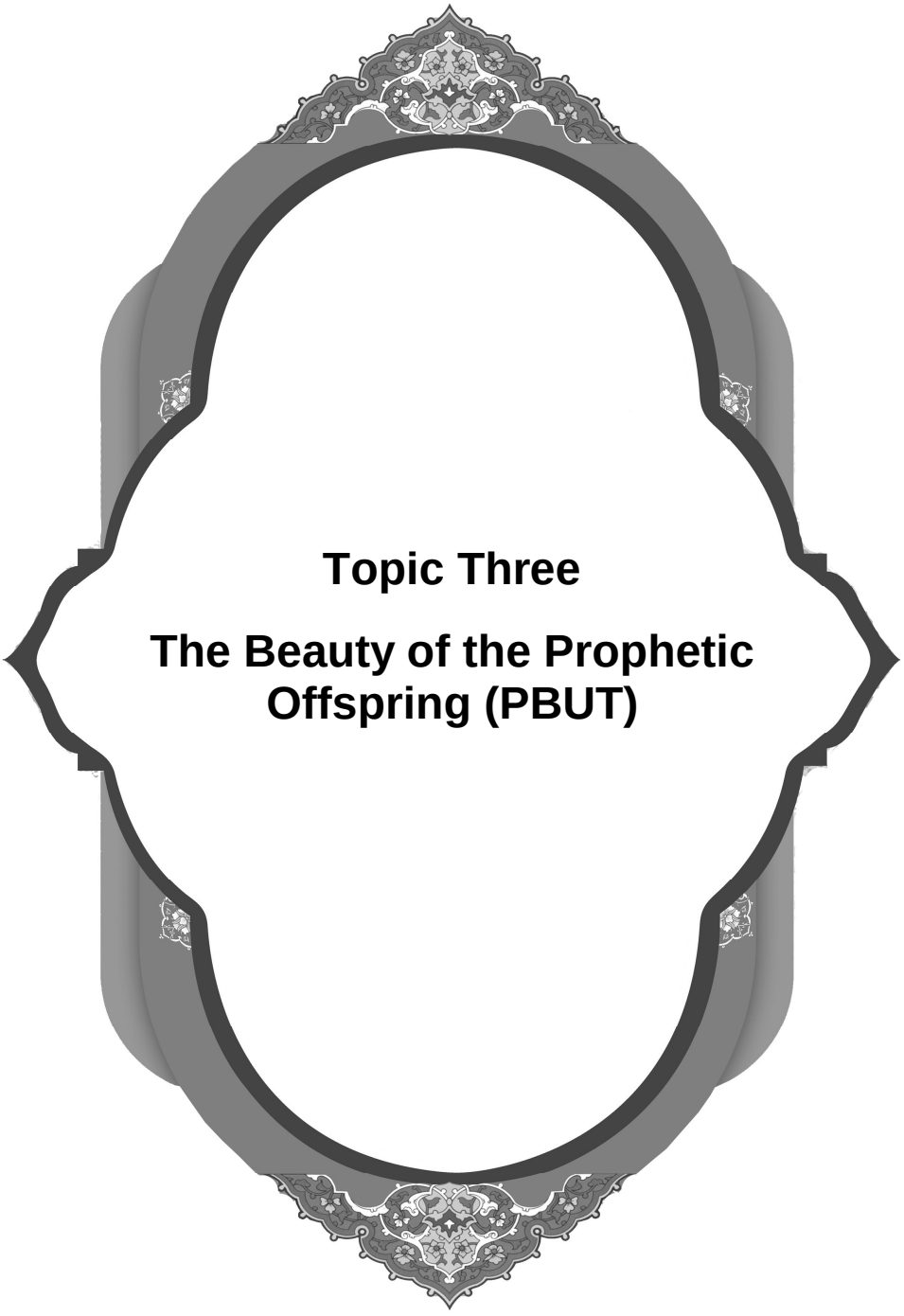
2 5.13

3 7.199

4 23.96

5 Al-Kafi, v2, p108. Al-Iman Wa Al-Kofr, Section: Pardon, Hadith 9.

6 Majma' Al-Bayan, Al-Tabarsi, v10, p380.



Topic Three

The Beauty of the Prophetic Offspring (PBUT)

In this topic, we will discuss both the mental and physical aesthetics to seek knowledge on beauty within the Prophetic offspring and household, especially in relation the tragic events of Karbala and the calamity of ‘Ashura. Using these two approaches, we shall first begin with the beauty of the features of Ahl Al-Kisaa – the people of the cloth – (PBUT), and then we shall move on to a number of Noble Hadith in which the word, beauty, was mentioned in detail. This way the readers can create a full picture about beauty as a notion and as a sentimental attitude.

To talk about the beauty of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) is to take a journey to the celestial beauty and drink from the springs of enlightenment, purity and tranquility. To talk about the beauty of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) is to discover the incorporeal ecstasy and the spiritual serenity as nothing seen and felt before. This is because their beauty is the reflection of the Divine beauty spread to all mankind.

In fact, when the Almighty Lord wanted us to see His attributes through the offspring of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUT), that is, the Almighty Allah placed His attributes into certain chosen people, namely the Prophets, the Messengers and the Infallible Imams – peace be upon them. They are, therefore, representing the Divine Beauty and Perfection.

Accordingly, if we want to appreciate the Divine Mercy, we can see it embodied in that one person was sent as “mercy to the world”. If we want to appreciate the Divine Light, we can look to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

Now, the Noble Quran introduced us to a number of Holy Verses talking about those aesthetic attributes and characteristics of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

> *(O Prophet! Surely We have sent you as a witness, and as a bearer of good news and as a warner۞And as one inviting to Allah by His permission, and as a light-giving torch)*[1].

This one Holy Verse, from Al-Ahzab Chapter, comprises a number of characteristics and attributes specific to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) separate from other Prophets and Messengers (PBUT). These attributes are: Prophethood (Nobowa), Messengership (Risala), witness (Shahada), bearer of good news (Bishara), warner (Nizara), inviting to Allah (Da'wa) and light-giving torch (Siraj Monir).

Thus, all of the beautiful characteristics were placed by the Almighty Allah in their pure entities, both physically and morally, so that they would become the entrance to the Almighty Allah. On the other hand, all of the characteristics related to ignorance and depravity were gathered in their enemies so that the wise would differentiate between the two contradictory pictures of beauty and ugliness.

In fact, if we were to talk about the beauty of the offspring of the Prophet (PBUT), we would deviate ourselves from the main objective of this book, as it would also take several books to cover all their physical and moral characteristics.

However, we cannot totally neglect the image through which our dear readers would be able to recognize some of the beautiful features of the pure offspring (PBUT) and ultimately see the beauty of the day of 'Ashura.

1 33.45-46

First issue: the beauty of the features of the Prophet Mohammad's offspring (PBUT)

Historically speaking, there are two images drawn for the beauty of Ahl Al-Bait of Prophet Mohammad (PBUT): an image on the overall beauty of those bright figures and another image on their individual beauty. Now, we are going to have some evidence.

First image: their overall beauty

One of the significant historical events that explicitly reflects the beautiful image of the features of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT), specifically Ahl Al-Kisaa – the people of the cloth, is Al-Mobahala (the Supplication). This incident was mentioned in the Noble Quran as it was passed by Muslim narrators and kept in their works in several ways.

The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

> *(Surely the likeness of Isa is with Allah as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was ۞ This is the truth from your Lord, so be not of the disputers ۞ But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars)*[1].

Fakhr Al-Razi said in his interpretation of these Holy Verses: "It

1 3.59-61

was reported that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) presented the Christians of Najran with evidence, yet they insisted on their ignorance, therefore the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said:

Allah commanded me to supplicate against you if you did not accept my evidence.

They said: O Abul-Qasim! We have to go back to consider this carefully, then we shall come to you.

When they returned, they said to their 'Aqib (counselor): That was their opinion. O Abdul-Masih! What do you think? He said: By God, you, Christian people, learned that Mohammad is a prophet, and that he has spoken right of your fellow. By God, no people supplicated against a prophet and continued to live, both the youth and the aged. If you do that, eradication will be your end result, but if you insist on your faith with no change, make peace with the man and leave back home.

At this point, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) set out carrying Al-Hussein and holding the hand of Al-Hasan while Fatima was walking behind him and Ali (PBUT) was walking behind her. Here, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH):

When I pray, say Amen.

The bishop of Najran said: O Christians! I see features that if asked God to remove a mountain, He would remove it for them. Do not supplicate or you shall perish remain and no Christian shall remain on the face of the earth to the Day of Resurrection"[1].

Now, if we look attentively at this incident and its details, we will be able to raise many questions, some of which are:

A – What beauty did the eyes of the Christian bishop noticed yet

1 The incident of Mobahala (The Supplication) is famous among Musluims, both the common people and prominent people; some spoke at great length about it and others in brief, yet it was all over their books. See the words of the Christian Bishop in: Al-Taraef, Al-'Allama Al-Saiyed Bin Tawous – May God bless his soul, p42. Al-'Omda, Bin Al-Batriq, p189. Iqbal Al-A'mal, v2, p350. Al-Bihar, Al-Majlisi, v21, p277. Tohafat Al-Ahwazi, Mobarakfouri, v8, p279. Tarikh Al-Ahadith Wa Al-Athaar, Al-Zaila'i, v1, p186. Tafsir Al-Kashaaf, Al-Zamakhshari, v1, p434. Tafsir Al-Tha'labi, v3, p85. Tafsir Al-Baghwi, v1, p360. Tafsir Al-Nasfi, v1, p158. Tafsir Al-Fakhr Al-Razi, v8, p85. Tafsir Al-Baidhawi, v2, p47. Tafsir Al-Alousi, v3, p189. Tafsir Abul-Sa'oud, v2, p46. Matalib Al-Saoul, Bin Talha, p39, Revised by Majid Al-'Atiya.

some other Muslims did not that made him avoid supplication against the Messenger of Allah and his household (PBUT)?!

B – What features are they that encompass such loftiness, freshness and beauty and that if they asked the Almighty Allah to remove a mountain, He would remove it?!

C – Did the bishop want to tell the Christians that these features had such luminous manifestations that would make a mountain completely flat? Or did these features have such Divine sanctity that would change the norms and laws of the universe?!

These could probably be facts rather than questions and the bishop concealed them from his people fearing that he would be accused of heresy or his people would depart him.

Accordingly, this incident has revealed many facts regarding the issue of prophethood as well as Ahl Al-Bait – People of the House – (PBUT); these facts are as the following:

1. The beauty and gracefulness of their features.

2. The sanctity they have with the Almighty Allah.

Therefore, the bishop saw this beauty and this sanctity in the faces of Ahl Albait (PBUT), not to mention that this fact is referred to in several prayers such as the one beseeching the Messenger of Allah and his offspring (PBUT)[1].

As a matter of fact, the bishop was familiar with the face of the Prophet (PBUH) before the Supplication, and the same with Imam Ali (PBUH) because he was almost always with the Prophet (PBUH). He did not see the face of Fatima (PBUT) except her gown as she was walking behind her father, Prophet Mohammad (PBUT).

Therefore, the new thing for the bishop was seeing the faces of Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein (PBUT), as he noticed the remarkable resemblance between them and their grandfather (PBUH) and

1 'Allama Al-Majlisi – May God bless his soul – said that this prayer was reported by Mohammad Bin Babawaih – May God bless his soul – who said: Whenever I said this prayer, it was quickly answered. The prayer is: "O Lord! I beseech You and I address You via Your Prophet, the Prophet of kindness, Mohammad (PBUH). O Abul-Qasim! O Messenger of Allah! O our master and lord! We address you and beseech you to intercede with Allah. We present our requests to you, as you have sanctity before Allah; intercede with Allah to forgive us, etc." (Al-Bihar, v99, p247. Mafatih Al-Jinan: 154).

learned that if those luminous and bright faces said prayers, there was no way it would not be answered.

Second image: their individual beauty

A – Beautiful attributes of Ali (PBUH)

We should start with the aesthetic image of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), but we will postpone this issue until the chapter related to "individual aspect of aesthetics in 'Ashura".

Therefore, we are going to discuss the aesthetic image of Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH), yet we need to begin with an introduction in this regard.

In fact, the enemies of Allah and His Messenger (PBUH) have worked hard to conceal the virtues and merits narrated or printed in regard to Imam Ali (PBUH), forgetting or pretending to have forgotten that the unbelievers can never cover the Divine light no matter what they do, and that the believers will continue to adhere to the beautiful virtues and merits represented in Amir Mu'menin, Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH).

Therefore, the dissidents have tried to mislead people through concealing and also distorting the aesthetic attributes of Imam Ali (PBUH).

For example, it was mentioned that Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) was described as "the free full" (Anza' Al-Bateen) in order to empty the aesthetic meaning and to give the false impression to readers, whereas the original Hadith narrated from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) is completely different as he clearly reveals the virtues and merits of Imam Ali (PBUH).

Zaid Bin Ali Bin Al-Hussein (PBUT) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said:

> *"O Ali! Allah has indeed forgiven you, your offspring, your companions and your followers, and be delighted as you are the free full; you are free of disbelief and full of knowledge"*[1].

1 Al-Amali, Sheikh Al-Tousi, p293. Mosnad Zaid Bin Ali (PBUH), p456. Al-Maghazi, Al-Waqidi, p157. Al-Bihar, v27, p27. Al-Manaqib, Al-Khawarazmi, p294. Yanabi' Al-Mawadda, v2, p357.

However, some sources describing Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) narrated that he was “somehow short and bald with a large abdomen”. Even if this was true, it has to be considered as part of the unseen and that the wisdom of Allah gathered all that is beyond the capabilities of mankind in Ali (PBUH).

In other words, human body is biologically in need of the regulations and requirements set by the organs and cells in order to survive. So, we drink water when we feel thirsty, we eat when we feel hungry, we sleep for six or eight hours a day, and so on. Now, if any of these regulations and requirements is not responded, the body will be exposed to weakness and fatigue. Also, excessive respond to these needs can lead to idleness, lack of motivation, obesity, and many other difficulties and diseases.

For that reason, we see Amir Mu’menin, Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) with: his abdomen despite frequent staying awake for night prayers, fasting, fighting holy wars, having little food and drink and wearing coarse clothing. This is in addition to his duties and responsibilities toward his people and public affairs as well as his domestic affairs in regard to his wife and children that forced upon him to make a lot of efforts.

Despite all that, he was potbellied! This can only be found with those chosen by the Almighty Allah, as he managed to assemble the opposites and he perfected them spiritually, mentally and physically.

Consequently, Ali (PBUH) is tenderhearted and tearful yet courageous! He uses patience and lenience with Fatima (PBUH), yet he keeps his honor and pride! His is generous with all breadwinners in need, yet he puts a glowing coal in the hands of his brother, ‘Aqeel! He is content with only two loaves of barley, yet his stomach draws the beholders’ attention! There are more and more of these opposite attributes.

However, there is a huge question mark hanging over the fact that the dissidents have continued to adhere to this specific attribute of Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) apart from his many other attributes.

This is actually traced back to their leader, Mo’awiya Bin Abu Sofyan, who was afflicted with gluttony when the Prophet (PBUH) invoked Allah against him:

"O Lord! Do not satiate his stomach"[1].

Mo'awiya used to eat day and night and say: "I am not full but exhausted"[2].

It was also reported that he said: "I am not full, but I am sick and tired"[3].

Therefore, we see his loyal followers focus on "the free full". However, we do know that he was not potbellied because he was eating so much that he would get exhausted – God forbid. Imam Ali (PBUH) was "full of knowledge" in the sense that a thousand doors of knowledge had been opened for him and each door would again lead to another thousand doors[4].

After this introduction, our dear readers can now learn about the true aesthetic image of Amir Al-Mu'mein (PBUH) through the following two narrations:

First Narration

Al-'Allama Al-Majlisi, Al-Tabari and Bin Abdul-Bir said describing Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH): "His best characteristics that I noticed are: his medium height, more to a short man, his black eyes[5], his fine face that is like a full moon, his large abdomen, his broad shoulders[6], coarse hands[7], inclined neck like a silver jug, his bald head except some hair on the back of his head and his beard.

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1 Al-Ihtijaj, Al-Tabrasi – May God bless his soul, v1, p408. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi – May God bless his soul, v44, p77. Sharh Nahj Al-Balagha, Bin Abul-Hadid, v4, p55. Tahzib Al-Kamal, Al-Mazi, v1, p338. Tazkirat Al-Hifaz, Al-Zahabi, v2, p699. Tahzib Al-Tahzib, Bin Hojr, v1, p33. Tarikh Al-Islam, Al-Zahabi, v23, p107. Al-Wafi Bil-Wafiyat, Al-Safadi, v6, p257.

2 Al-Lam'a Al-Dimashqiya, Al-Shahid Al-Thani – May God bless his soul, v2, p366.

3 Sharh Nahj Al-Balagha, Bin Abul-Hadid Al-Mo'tazili, v4, p55. Al-Nasaeh Al-Kafia, Bin 'Aqeel, p202.

4 Rasael Al-Mortadha, v1, p317. Al-Khilaf, Sheikh Al-Tousi, v1, p539. Al-Mo'tabar, Al-Mohaqqiq Al-Hilli, v2, p25, Saiyed Al-Shohadaa Foundation. Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr, v1, p315. A'laam Al-Wara, v1, p267.

5 The Arabic word, Ad'aj, means wide black eye (Al-Sihah, Al-Jawhari, v1, p314).

6 The Arabic word, Mankab, means broad shoulder (Al-Sihah, Al-Jawhari, v1, p228).

7 The Arabic word, Shathin, means coarse, thick and rough (Al-Sihah, Al-Jawhari, v5, p2147)

His shoulders are huge and you cannot make a distinction between his forearm and upper arm; they are merged like a ferocious lion. When he walks, he limps, and if he takes a man by the arm, he takes his breath. He is rather stout, and he has a firm forearm and hand. He goes jogging to war; he is fearless, strong, brave and victorious against opponents"[1].

Second Narration

This narration comes from the Master of all people, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), who is endowed with insight, who is the most eloquent person spoken Arabic, who assembles all forms of beauty. Therefore, his view is not restricted to a certain time or place. On the contrary, he sees all the beauty depicted and created by the Almighty Allah.

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) knows about the beauty of Yousif – Joseph – (PBUH), and here when he sees the beauty of Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH), he addresses people comparing his beauty to that of Yousif (PBUH):

> *"If you like to see the beauty of Yousif, the generosity of Ibrahim – Abraham, the grace of Solaiman – Solomon – and the strength of Dawoud – David, look at him"[2].*

This Hadith had a mind-boggling impact on the opponents and dissidents, as they could not comprehend how Imam Ali (PBUH), could draw together all this beauty, generosity, grace and strength?!

Every time they looked at themselves in the mirror or at their rulers, they saw ugliness, stinginess, deep frown and frailty. So, who would follow them or even look at them except for filthy faithless people like themselves?!

1 Tahzib Al-Tahzib, Bin Hojr, v7, p297. Tahzib Al-Kamal, Al-Mazi, v20, p489. Al-Bihar, Al-Majlisi, v35, p5. Zakhaer Al-'Oqba, Al-Tabari, p57. Al-Fosoul Al-Mohimma, Bin Al-Sabbagh, v1, p598. Jawahir Al-Matalib, Bin Al-Dimashqi, p36. Mostadrak Safinat Al-Bihar, p55. Waq'at Seffin, p233. Kashf Al-Ghimma, Al-Arbali, v1, p82. Sharh Nahj Al-Balagha, Al-Mo'tazili, p178.

2 See the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) on the beauty of Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH): Al-Amali, Sheikh Al-Sadouq – May God bless his soul, p757. Manaqib Aal Abi Talib, Bin Shihr, v3, p57. Al-Bihar, Al-Majlisi, v39, p35. Yanabi' Al-Mawadda, Al-Qandouzi, v2, p183. Zakhaer Al-'Oqba, Al-Tabari, p94. Binaa Al-Maqala Al-Fatimiya, Bin Tawous, p170.

They attempted to mislead people, but they did not know that it is impossible to conceal the truth and that the sun's rays cannot be covered. In brief, truth travels over time and place no matter how hard they try to manipulate the people's perception.

For instance, Bin Al-Jawzi said when he came across this Hadith: "We might have somehow spoken at great length about certain ways forgers use to repulsively exaggerate in praising the rulers, yet we have not discussed those traditions some forge to deify Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali – may God be pleased with him, as this is the obvious disbelief, the absolute infidelity and the blind sedition.

What we mentioned so far is just a sample of their attempts in order to force Ali – may God be pleased with him – into the Prophethood so much so that they used their demons to forge traditions that give Ali – may God be pleased with him – the better share and that make the Prophet (PBUH) his subordinate – God forbid.

They say that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: Ali has the same status to me as my head to my body. So, what did they leave the Prophet (PBUH) with, giving this superiority to Ali – may God be pleased with him? They even considered looking at the face of Ali a form of worship… and so on"[1].

In order to refute this dissenting opinion, we say:

1. People of unsightly beliefs have a tendency to choosing a narration that is controversial and carry this bloody shirt demanding the defense of the Prophet (PBUH) while he renounces their claims and resents their actions.

However, if they fairly transmitted the Hadith, Muslims would then be able to take the right path.

2. The comparison between the beauty of Ali and Yousif (PBUT) has nothing to do with disbelief, unless this Bin Al-Jawzi blames the hereditary characteristics transferred from Ibrahim to Yousif, Solaiman, Dawoud and then to the cousin of Prophet Mohammad (PBUT). Is this now an act of disbelief?!

Bin Al-Jawzi is actually pardoned for he did not know that time and

1 Al-Mawdhou'at, Bin Al-Jawzi, v1, p17, Revised by Abdul-Rahman Mohammad 'Othman.

scientific facts were going to wipe away a lot of ignorance; he was living in a cocoon believing that the resemblance between grandfathers and grandsons is a form of disbelief. Bin Al-Jawzi was so arrogance that he could never notice that Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) is one of the offspring of Ibrahim and a natural descendant of all those Prophets (PBUT).

He definitely did not read these Holy Verses from the Noble Quran:

> *(And We gave to him Ishaq and Ya'qoub; each did We guide, and Nouh did We guide before, and of his descendants, Dawoud and Solaiman and Aiyoub and Yousif and Haroun; and thus do We reward those who do good to others۞And Zakariya and Yahya and 'Isa and Ilyas; everyone was of the good۞And Isma'il and Al-Yasha and Younis and Lut; and everyone We made to excel in the worlds۞And from among their fathers and their descendants and their brethren, and We chose them and guided them into the right way)*[1].

3. The eloquence of Haroun (Aaron) was not going to harm Mousa (Moses) in any way! His participation in Mousa's affairs did not degrade his position and his status! Had he read the Noble Quran, Bin Al-Jawzi would learn about these words of Almighty Allah:

(And certainly We gave Musa the Book and We appointed with him his brother Haroun an aider)[2].

> *(And my brother, Haroun, he is more eloquent of tongue than 1, therefore send him with me as an aider, verifying me: surely I fear that they would reject me)*[3].

The Almighty Allah has all the right to favor someone and take him under His mercy. Therefore, the Almighty Lord selects Ali (PBUH) to be the brother and minister of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). Obviously, Bin Al-Jawzi seems to be oblivious of this fact, otherwise he would have known that the status and position of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) remained untouched having Ali (PBUH) beside him.

1 6.84-87
2 25.35
3 28.34

The Prophet (PBUH) was aware of the virtues and status of his cousin, as Mousa was aware of the eloquence of Haroun. You need to look at who you follow because he harmed the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and let Muslims look at the mosques, at the Noble Quran, at the Sacred House, at the Prophet's Mosque and at the face of Ali (PBUH). Leave people to their Creator as He is the One Who will call them to account.

> *(Surely your Lord best knows him who errs from His way, and He best knows the followers of the right course)*[1].

As a final point, when the Prophetic traditions go through minds, they carry either beautiful or hideous beliefs. It is like the wind; it can carry either good or stinking smell depending on the places it passes through.

B – Beautiful attributes of Fatima (PBUH)

The beauty of the precious daughter of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) is a very difficult topic to cover for these following reasons:

1. Fatima (PBUH) is known for her modesty and purity, as she is the chastest lady of all times; it was mentioned that she would not even let a blind man come inside.

Imam Ja'far Bin Mohammad narrated from his father, from his grandfather, Ali Bin Al-Hussein (PBUT), that his father said:

> *"A blind man asked permission from Fatima, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), to enter but she prevented him. The Prophet (PBUH) said to her: Why did you prevent him? He cannot see you! She said: O Messenger of Allah! He cannot see me, but I can see him, and he can also smell. The Prophet (PBUH) said: I bear witness that you are part of me"*[2].

2. The creation of Fatima (PBUH) took place in Heaven as described by the Messenger of Allah (PBUH):

"Fatima Al-Hawraa was created in Paradise. Whenever I miss the smell of Paradise, I smell my daughter, Fatima"[3].

1 68.7

2 Mostadrak Al-Wasael, v14, p289. Al-Nawadir, Al-Rawandi, p119. Da'aem Al-Islam, Al-Maghribi, v2, p214. Al-Bihar, v43, p91. Jame' Ahadith Al-Shi'a, Al-Borojerdi, v20, p299. Dorar Al-Akhbar, Al-Hijazi, p304.

3 Al-Amani, Al-Sadouq – May God bless his soul, p546. Manaqib Al-Imam Amir Al- →

A person with such a status is beyond description.

3. Traditional laws and norms practiced by common people and prominent people forced upon them to honor and protect their mothers, sisters, daughters and wives.

The sanctity of Fatima (PBUH), as the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and the lady of all ladies, puts her above all women of the worlds, including the women of the Prophets (PBUT).

Therefore, it is reported that she said: "It is to the benefit of women to not see men and not be seen by man"[1].

However, believers, men and women, are able to see the beautiful attributes of Fatima (PBUH) deep in their hearts and through the following two narrations.

First Narration

Bin 'Amara reported that his father said: I asked Abu Abdullah (PBUH) why she was not named Al-Zahra (luminous). He said:

> *"This is because when she stood in her Mihrab (prayer niche), she casts her luminous light to the people of the heaven as the luminous light of planets casts to the people of the Earth"[2].*

Second Narration

'Aisha, the spouse of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "We used to spin in dark nights on the luminous face of Fatima (PBUH)"[3].

C – Beautiful attributes of Imam Al-Hasan, the Chosen (PBUH)

Narrators described the beauty of Imam Al-Hasan (PBUH), the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), from two aspects:

First, some narrators ascribed the beauty of Imam Al-Hasan

←

Mu'menin, Al-Koufi, p191. Al-Ihtijaj, Al-Tabarsi, v2, p191. Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr, v3, p114. Ma'ani, Al-Akhbar, Al-Sadouq, p396. Kashf Al-Ghimma, Al-Arbali, v2, p87.

1 Mostadrak Al-Wasael, v14, p183. Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr Ashob, v3, p119. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi – May God bless his soul, v43, p84. Majma' Al-Zawaed, Al-Haithami, v4, p255.

2 'Ilal Al-Sharae', Sheikh Al-Sadouq – May God bless his soul, v1, p180.

3 Akhbar Al-Dowal, Al-Qarmani, v2, p201.

(PBUH) to his resemblance to his grandfather, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), as they both shared the same features from chest to head[1].

Second, other narrators showed interest on the aesthetic attributes related specifically to Imam Al-Hasan (PBUH). They said: Al-Hasan (PBUH) had reddish white skin, black eyes[2], flat cheeks, delicate chest hair[3], thick beard[4] and abundant[5] hair, a neck like a silver jug, big bones, broad shoulders[6], medium height, not tall or short, a quite handsome face among all people, used to dye black, frizzy[7] hair and a well-built body[8].

D – Beautiful attributes of Imam Hussein, the Martyr (PBUH)

Narrators described the beauty of Imam Hussein (PBUH), also the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), from several aspects. Some of the narrators focused to the beautiful features of his blessed body, and some others described the light of his face, yet most of them focused on the remarkable resemblance between Imam Hussein (PBUH) and his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

We can learn about the aesthetics attributes of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) through the following narrations:

1. The largest resemblance among Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) is between Imam Hussein (PBUH) and Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Although this narration is heart-rending and tear-jerking, it

1 Al-Bihar, Al-Majlisi, v44, p137. Kashf Al-Ghimma, Al-Arbali, v1, p148. Al-Zorriya Al-Tahira, Al-Doulabi, p104.

2 The Arabic word, Ad'aj, means wide black eye (Al-Sihah, Al-Jawhari, v2, p148).

3 The Arabic word, Masraba, means the hair on the chest down to the navel like a rod (Al-'Ain, Al-Farahidi, v7, p249).

4 The Arabic word, Kath or Akath, means bushy or thick and it is used to describe beards (Al-'Ain, Al-Farahidi, v5, p276).

5 The Arabic word, Wafra, means the hair of the head that hangs down over the ears (Lisan Al-'Arab, v5, p288).

6 The Arabic word, Mankab, means broad shoulder (Lisan Al-'Arab, v1, p771).

7 The Arabic word, Ja'id, means frizzy or very tightly curled hair which is a characteristic among most the Arabs unlike the straight hair of the none-Arabs, the Romans and the Persians (Lisan Al-'Arab, v3, p122).

8 Kashf Al-Ghimma, Al-Arbali, v2, p148. Al-Zorriya Al-Tahira, Al-Doulabi, p120. Zakhaer Al-'Oqba, Al-Tabari, p62. Al-Bihar, v43, p303. Al-Dor Al-Nadheem, Bin Hatem Al-'Ameli, p515.

provides the believers with a beautiful image of Imam Hussein (PBUH).

Al-Tormozi reported, in his Sahih, that Anas Bin Malik said: "I was with Bin Ziad when the head of Hussein was brought to him. He said[1]: Even with a rod in his head, I have never seen such splendor. I said: He had the largest resemblance to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)".

Al-Tormozi then says: This is a fair, sound and unfamiliar Hadith[2].

Despite the wounds and the blood and the mud and the sunburn, the beauty of Hussein (PBUH) overcomes the laws of nature. What is really strange here is that 'Obaidullah Bin Ziad sees the beauty and gracefulness and admits he has never seen such splendor. What is stranger is that Lady Zainab (PBUH) managed to endure parting this beauty!

2. Beautiful attributes of his blessed body (PBUH)

Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali Bin Abi talib (PBUH) said:

> *"It is His miraculous act to look at Al-Hasan Bin Ali from face to neck and see the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and it is His miraculous act to look at Al-Hussein Bin Ali from neck to ankle and see the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)"[3].*

It is reported that Zobair Bin Bakkar said: "The body of Hussein (PBUH) is similar to the body of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)"[4].

It is also narrated that Anas Bin Malik said: "No one had that resemblance to the Prophet (PBUH) like Al-Hussein Bin Ali

1 This is how it was narrated, yet it could have been distorted from "he joked" to "he said" so that the readers do not notice the hideous act of Bin Ziad against the head of the Master of the Youth of Heaven (PBUH).

2 Sonan Al-Tormozi, v5, p325, No. 3867. Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr, v3, p230. Al-'Omda, Bin Al-Batriq, p397. Al-Bihar, Al-Majlisi, v44, p216. Mosnad Ahmad Bin Hanbal, v3, p261. Mosnad Anas Bin Malik, Sahih Al-Bokhari, v4, p216, Section: Virtues of the Immigrants and their Merits. Mosnad Abi Ya'la, v5, p228. 'Omdat Al-Qari, v16, p240.

3 Al-Mo'jam Al-Kabir, Al-Tabarani, v3, p95, Hadith 2768. Nadhm Dorar Al-Samtain, Al-Zarandi Al-Hanafi, p194. Kanz Al-'Emal, Al-Mottaqi Al-Hindi, v13, p695, Hadith 37673. Ma'arij Al-Wosoul Ila Ma'rifat Aal Al-Rasoul, Al-Zarandi Al-Shafe'i, p86.

4 Majma' Al-Zawaed, Al-Haithami, v9, p185. Sharh Ihqaq Al-Haq, v27, p31.

(PBUH)"[1].

3. No one ever had the beauty and gracefulness of Al-Hussein (PBUH)

'Obaidullah Bin Al-Hor Al-Ja'fi was one of whom Imam Hussein (PBUH) went to and asked to come to his aid, but 'Obaidullah failed to answer his call. When Imam Hussein (PBUH) was martyred in Karbala, 'Obaidullah Bin Al-Hor regretted that he had abandoned him.

He went on talking to people about his meeting with Imam Hussein (PBHU) describing his beauty and his condition, telling them that: "I have never seen anyone with the beauty and gracefulness of Imam Hussein (PBUH), and I have never felt sympathy for anyone like when I saw him walking with the boys around him"[2].

4. His white forehead and throat had people led to him in darkness

Bin Shihr Ahob mentioned that: "Imam Hussein (PBUH) used to sit in a dark place and his white forehead and throat had people led to him"[3].

Apparently, the whiteness her is a reference to the light, as it cannot be possible that Imam Hussein (PBUH) had white forehead and throat but dark face! Moreover, it has to be a sort of natural light as far as it helped people see through darkness and from a distance.

Consequently, this narration certainly tells us that this whiteness of the forehead and the neck of Imam Hussein (PBUH) is a light with a white color, and that the beholders in that dark place were guided to Imam Hussein (PBUH) by this light emitted from his forehead and throat. We do know that a butterfly in a dark room, for example, is attracted toward the glare of the candle light.

5. Beautiful attributes of his blessed voice (PBUH)

Al-Hafiz Bin 'Asakir Al-Dimashqi said that there was a nice twang

1 Moqaddamat Fath Al-Bari, Bin Hojr, p475, Published by Ehya Al-Torath Al-'Arabi.

2 Khizanat Al-Adab, Al-Baghdadi, v2, p139. Al-Dor Al-Nadheem, Bin Hatem Al-'Ameli, p549. Absaar Al-'Ain, Al-Samawi, p152. Sharh Ihqaq Al-Haq, Al-Mar'ashi, v27, p31.

3 Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr, v3, p230. Minhaj Al-Saleheen, Ayatolla Sheikh Waheed Al-Khorasani, v4, p46. Bihar Al-Anwar, v44, p187. Al-'Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p30.

in the voice of Hussein (PBUH); Ghonna (twang) is this subtle nasal sound that is almost similar to the sound of the wind through intertwined trees, and this, therefore, was known as “signing garden”[1].

To be brief, these were the features that the people of Najran saw when they went for Supplication against the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

These were the features that had such luminous manifestations that could make a mountain move.

We shall leave the beautiful features related to other Infallible Imams (PBUH) to our dear readers and knowledge seekers so that we do not deviate from our main discussion.

1 Tarikh Dimashq – Tarjamat Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Hadith 264. Al-Nihaya Fi Qarib Al-Hadith, Bin Al-Atheer, v3, p390. Ihqaq Al-Haq, Al-Mar’ashi – May God bless his soul, v27, p35.

Second issue: the word, beauty, in the Noble Traditions from Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT)

The Noble Traditions we are going to discuss here are narrated from the Prophetic offspring (PBUT) and they deal with beauty in different things, as everything has its own external and internal beauty. These traditions also aim to shed light on some manifestations of beauty that tend to conceal ugliness from the beholders, and the human nature is actually attracted to beauty is drawn away from ugliness.

Therefore, these following Noble Traditions will illustrate the truth about beauty and its concept to all researchers and intellectuals:

1. Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali Bin Abi Talib, (PBUH) said: *"Nothing more beautiful than reason, less than that is worse than a lie"*[1].

2. It was reported that Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali Bin Abi Talib, (PBUH) said: *"Friday comes with visiting and beauty!"* He was asked: O Amir Al-Mu'menin! What is the beauty? He said: *"Perform the religious obligation and exchange visits"*[2].

3. Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) narrated that Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali Bin Abi Talib, (PBUH) said: *"Women's reason is in their beauty and men's beauty is in their reason"*[3].

4. Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) said: *"Piety and generosity are the beauty of the poor"*[4].

1 Al-Kafi, Al-Kolaini, v8, p18. Al-Bihar, v1, p84.
2 Mostadrak Al-Wasael, v6, p7.
3 Al-Amaali, Al-Sadouq, p228.
4 Mostadrak Al-Wasael, v11, p175. Mishkat Al-Anwar, Al-Tabarsi. Ma'ani Al-Akhbar, Al-Sadouq, p234.

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) here refers to the fact that generosity and piety can be used by the poor to cover the ugliness of poverty before people.

5. Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) said: *"Nobility of character is a beauty in this world and a pleasant journey in the next world"*[1].

6. Imam Al-Hasan Al-'Askari (PBUH) said: *"Fine appearance is external beauty and fine reason is internal beauty"*[2].

7. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"Knowledge is a beauty that cannot be hidden and a fellow that cannot be mistreated"*[3].

8. It was reported that Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of knowledge is in its dissemination, its fruit is in putting it into action and its maintenance is within the right people"*[4].

9. Imam Ali (PBUH) also said: *"The beauty of a scholar is in putting his knowledge into action"*[5].

10. Again, Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"Good intention is the beauty of the soul"*[6].

11. Imam Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of the Noble Quran is in Al-Baqara and Aal 'Imran"*[7].

12. Moreover, Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of the servants – of God – is their obedience"*[8].

13. Imam Ali (PBUH) also said: *"Honesty is a man's beauty"*[9].

14. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"Questing for manners is a beautiful work"*[10].

15. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of a man is in his dignity"*[11].

16. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"Having a good reputation is a beautiful*

1 Mostadrak Al-Wasael, v8, p449. Al-Bihar, v68, p293.
2 Al-Bihar, v1, p95.
3 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v42, No. 55.
4 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v44.
5 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v45.
6 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v92.
7 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v110.
8 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v181.
9 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v693.
10 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v248.
11 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v250.

power"[1].

17. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of a believer is in his piety"*[2].

18. Also, Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"Piety is the beauty of the religion"*[3].

19. Moreover, Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of a man is in his dignity"*[4].

20. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of politics is to be just when in command and be forgiving when in power"*[5].

21. Amir Al- Mu'menin (PBUH) said: *"Justice is the support of the people and the beauty of the supporters"*[6].

22. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of a kind act is in its completion"*[7].

23. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of charity is to desist from reminding"*[8].

24. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of life is in contentment"*[9].

25. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"There is no beauty like honorable lineage"*[10].

26 - Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of fraternity is in good companionship"*[11].

27. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"The beauty wisdom is in leniency and indulgence"*[12].

28. Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali, (PBUH) said: *"The beauty of an honorable man is his avoidance of disgrace"*[13].

1 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v255.
2 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v269.
3 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v271.
4 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v285.
5 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v339.
6 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v340.
7 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v383.
8 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v390.
9 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v391.
10 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v409.
11 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v215.
12 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v445.
13 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v325.

29. Imam Ali (PBUH) also said: *"The beauty of evil is in greediness"*[1].

30. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"If you do not endure somewhat, you hear nothing beautiful in return"*[2].

31. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"If you were to see charity in form, you would see a beautiful form"*[3].

32. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: "How ugly man would be when ill inside and beautiful outside"[4].

33. Moreover, Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"Beautiful intentions result in fulfilling desires"*[5].

34. Again, Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"Accustom yourself to good will and beautiful intention, and you will achieve success"*[6].

35. Imam Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) said: *"Beautiful deed tells of good breed"*[7].

36. Imam Ali (PBUH) also said: *"Beautiful word proves one's abundance of reason"*[8].

37. Imam Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) said: *"Modesty is a beautiful merit"*[9].

38. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"A hypocrite is beautiful on the outside and ill on the inside"*[10].

39. Imam Ali (PBUH) said: *"beautiful intention proves pure breed"*[11].

40. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: *"Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. He loves to see the effect of His grace on His servants and detests misery and feigning misery"*[12].

1 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v297.
2 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v287.
3 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v383.
4 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v458.
5 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v92.
6 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v92.
7 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v153.
8 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v210.
9 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v256.
10 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v311.
11 Ghorar Al-Hikam, v409.
12 Mizan Al-Hikma, Rayshahri, v1, p414.



Topic Four

The Concept of Aesthetics to Imam Hussein (PBUH) from Psychological and Philosophical Perspectives

Now that we learned about beauty through the Noble Traditions from the Prophetic offspring (PBUT), especially from the articulate and the eloquent Amir Al-Mu'menin, Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH), we can move on to discuss the concept of beauty in regard to Imam Hussein (PBUH) as an introduction to the beauty of 'Ashura.

First issue: the concept of aesthetics to Imam Hussein (PBUH) from the psychological perspective

Imam Hussein (PBUH) said:

> *"Learn that kind acts let you gain praise and later reward; if you were to see kindness as a man, he would be good-looking to the beholders, and if you were to see villainy, he would be distasteful, hideous, deformed and repulsed by beholders"*[1].

When we look at life, we find out that there are many worlds surrounding human beings, and every one of these worlds has its own nature and its own characteristics, which are different in the other worlds. These characteristics and features are actually there to serve two purposes:

First, they confirm the mightiness of Allah and present human reason with manifestations that Allah is the One Creator, the Disposer of all, the Generous Provider, the Bestower of Sustenance,

1 Kashf Al-Ghimma, v, p239. Mostadrak Al-Wasael, v13, p343. A'laam Al-Wara, p298. Al-Bihar, v75, p121. Sharh Ihqaq Al-Haq, Al-Mar'ashi, v19, p419. Jami' Ahadith Al-Shi'a, v13, p544. Nozhat Al-Nadhir, Al-Horani, p81. Mawsou'at Kalimat Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), p897.

the Granter of Life, the Causer of Death, and many other breathtaking, heart-warming, eye-catching and mind-boggling attributes.

Therefore, these manifestations help intellectuals and intelligentsia to find the path to the Unity of Lordship. However, Imam Hussein (PBUH) sees them from a different perspective!! So, what does he say in this regard?

Imam Hussein (PBUH) said:

> *"How do they make inquiries about You when they require You in their very existence? Can anything be a manifestation of You when they are in need of You? When were You absent at all to be in need of evidence to Your existence? When did You become distant at all so manifestations would show the path to You? May the eyes that do not see You as their Watcher be blind! May that bargain of a servant that does not grant him a share of Your love suffer loss"*[1].

This level of knowledge and this level of monotheism can only found with the Messenger of Allah and his household (PBUT).

Now, the second purpose they serve is the search for perfection and the thrust for life on this planet. The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

(And were it not for Allah's repelling some men with others, the earth would certainly be in a state of disorder; but Allah is Gracious to the creatures)[2].

The Almighty Allah set some characteristics for this thrust in our life, among which we can mention the following:

A - The biological (organic) perception

Most of the creatures that have the ability to grow, like animals, plants and human beings share biological perception. Therefore, each of these groups is affected by heat, cold, hunger, thirst, reproduction and so on.

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1 Mafateeh Al-Jinan, Sheikh 'Abbas Al-Qommi, the prayer of Imam Hussein (PBUH) on the day of 'Arafa.

2 2.251

B - The psychological (mental) perception

In regard to the psychological aspect, these groups differ from one another, For example, human beings and animals share the sense of fear, but plant don't have that. Moreover, some animals like birds and horses have this awareness when natural disasters are about to take place, but human beings do not have that ability.

C - The aesthetics perception

One of the most significant human features is the sense of beauty; human beings are the only creatures on this planet with this ability, and this is what distinguishes them from other species. In fact, all the beauty in the world was created by the Graceful Allah for the mankind in order to perceive and take pleasure.

Through beauty, human beings can grow true faith in the Last Day. However, when human beings lose their sense of beauty, they wither from deep inside and turn into a different creature with qualities and manners even lower than animals.

There are many different animals that refuse to live in isolated dark and dirty places, as they search for open and green spots where they can find food, fresh air and water. Yet, this creature that is called "human" stoops to a level lower than animals when they lose their sense of beauty, and when they habituate themselves with ugliness and foulness, this will lead also lead to their own destruction as well as their communities.

This very fact is clearly expressed by the Noble Quran as we can also see examples in the life of many people throughout history.

As for the Noble Quran, we are given a description for those with no sensitivity which is nothing like we know about in the world of anthropology! The Almighty Allah says:

(And certainly We have created for hell many of the jinn and the men; they have hearts with which they do not understand, and they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear; they are as cattle, nay, they are in worse errors; these are the heedless ones)[1].

The Noble Quran introduces us a new variety of creatures in the

1 7.179

sense that they biologically share the same bodily parts like ears, eyes and hands, and they all function properly. But, from the psychological perspective, they completely lack the sense of beauty.

They do have eyes, but they do not see or recognize beauty, the fact that makes them blind. Again, they have ears but with no sensitivity or perception toward beauty which makes deaf. Consequently, human beings turn into different creatures, and the Noble Quran describes them as not only "cattle" but they are even "in worse errors"; they are, in fact, "the heedless ones".

Therefore, such people do not have the eyes to see the beauty of those faces that "if asked God to remove a mountain, He would remove it for them"[1]. The Noble Quran also offers us a description of the faces of such people:

> *(And faces on that day, on them shall be dust۞Darkness shall cover them)*[2]*.*

Their hearts and minds are accustomed only to ugly and foul images and sounds. This failure in their very human essence is the reason why they stood against the pure Imams (PBUT) and rushed instead to some misguided leaders like a flock of wolves in a wasteland taking pleasure in people's pain.

As far as history is concerned, we learn stories about men and women exposing their ugly faces. One of these women took pleasure in devouring the liver of a dead man[3]. One of these men took pleasure in slaughtering a baby and crushing the body of his father with his horse's hooves[4]! He was singing with his ugly voice indifferent about the cries of the children who were watching that

1 The references related to the incident of Mobahala (The Supplication) were mentioned earlier in this book.

2 80. 40-41

3 This woman is Hind, the wife of Abu Sofyan and the mother of Mo'awiya; Bin Hojr Al-'Asqalani made mention of her with these words: "Bin Ishaq reported that Salih Bin Kisan said: Hind and other women were out mutilating the bodies of the dead, as they amputated their ears and noses, and Hind made a belt and necklaces out of them and then gave them to Wahshi as a token for killing Hamza. She ripped his chest open and masticated his liver; when Hind did not tolerate its taste, she spat it out". (Fath Al-Bari Bi-Sharh Sahih Al-Bokhari, Bin Hojr, v7, p272, Section: the Holy Battle of Ohod)

4 This infant is Abdullah, the son of Imam Hussein (PBUT), and the body in question is that of Imam Hussein (PBUH) himself.

luminous body being slaughtered and crushed!

Of course, the hideous and evil deeds of those so called human beings could never extinguish that Divine light, because such a man or woman is nothing but a (lying, sinful one)[1].

As a matter of fact, Imam Hussein (PBUH) perfectly knew those malicious people as he introduced them so that people would recognize them within their communities. He said: “if you were to see – kind acts – kindness as a man, he would be good-looking to the beholders, and if you were to see villainy, he would be distasteful, hideous, deformed and repulsed by beholders”.

Hence, beauty according to Imam Hussein (PBUH) mainly revolves around the psychological perception and shifts between pleasure and reluctance, that is, when the eyes recognizes some beautiful thing, this will instigate the psychological perception and the beholders will take pleasure through their eyes and deep in their hearts.

On the other hand, when the eyes recognize some villainous thing, this again will instigate the psychological perception but the beholders this time will be repulsed by that distasteful, hideous and deformed thing.

Overall, it is the heart that decides whether something is pleasant or repulsive, but when human heart does not make a distinction between pleasure and reluctance, and when their eyes cannot tell beauty from ugliness and when their ears fail to distinguish between pleasant voice and unpleasant voice, then they beyond doubt are “as cattle, nay, they are in worse errors”.

Even animals realize that they cannot kill or even harm members from their own species; they behave according to their instincts, but that only help them to attain food, haven, safety and mating in order to survive. Therefore, to be “heedless” of the pure Imams is to be even lower than that; it is to be distasteful, hideous, deformed and repulsed by beholders.

1 26.222

Second issue: the concept of aesthetics to Imam Hussein (PBUH) from the philosophical perspective

The purpose of bringing up the philosophical approaches related to beauty is not to defend the credibility of the Husseini thought. We, as Muslims, have this belief that perfection lies within Prophet Mohammad and his offspring (PBUT) who were chosen by the Almighty Allah to be His living evidence to the entire world.

Therefore, we discuss both ancient and modern philosophies and compare them with the concept of beauty to Imam Hussein (PBUH) in order to present an intellectual and comprehensive perspective to the way human beings perceive beauty contrary to other creatures.

This also helps to make distinctions among people themselves in accordance with their perceptual knowledge of beauty within their surrounding environment and ultimately its reflection through their artistic behaviors and moral values.

In view of that, we want to convey this Husseini message to every person seeking for beauty in philosophy, in art, in nature, in righteousness or in moral principles, and we do hope we would succeed in letting people know about the graceful aspects of the words of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT).

At the start, we should examine the words of philosophers on aesthetics and contemplate their approaches and points of view in this regard in order to get to the meaning of aesthetic perception according to Imam Hussein (PBUH). At the same time, we will talk about the effects of its absence on individuals' life and on society, needless to say that perceiving beauty is one of the fundamental elements of human behaviors.

A – Aesthetics according to Greek philosophers

Ancient Greece was famous for its skillful people in creating art and beauty. There is also no doubt that Greek philosophers were among the leading pioneers interested in beauty or what is academically known as the concept of aesthetic perception.

We are going to begin with Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, the masterminds of the Greek philosophy, and our main focus will be their philosophical views on beauty.

1. The philosophical view of Socrates on beauty (470 – 399 BC.)

According to Socrates, beauty has to serve a noble purpose, that is, it has to reveal goodness and high values. In other words, beauty is subjected to the utilitarian principle in the sense that anything has to be useful in one way or another in order to be described as beautiful, otherwise it is simply repulsive. This is because everything in the world has to be pursuing a purpose that will ultimately results in perfection if it is directed towards goodness and high moral values[1].

What I would like to say here is that if Socrates were living during the time of Imam Hussein (PBUH), he not only would have been among his followers, he also would have realized that all the beauty was embedded in Imam Hussein (PBUH) who identified beauty through charity and kind acts that spread righteousness and moral values.

Furthermore, this could be the reason why Imam Hussein (PBUH) set out on his last journey along with his household and followers. Imam Hussein (PBUH) noticed how repulsive and hideous life had become, therefore he found himself obliged to change the situation and bring beauty back to human life.

2. The philosophical view of Plato on beauty (427 – 374 BC.)

Plato considered beauty a form of perfection, and that beauty makes gradual progress starting from tangible or physical beauty to affection for comprehensive ideas and then to sheer and pure beauty (i.e. the love of God). Consequently, we have a gradual progress

1 Moqaddam Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p45 (not literal).

from platonic love to mystical love[1].

Plato also elaborates on this point saying that: “the true love is the love of beauty, and the pure beauty is God, and once the lover achieves that realization, this will lead them to be self-effacing and begin a purposeful exploration to the secrets of the universe as well as careful contemplation on its elements. This will in turn lead to realization of the beauty of the Divine truth and in the end to the belief that anything beautiful attains its beauty from God”[2].

This philosophy provided by Plato is largely in harmony with the philosophical view of Al-Farabi in the sense that it includes some of the principles on which monotheism is based. In other words, this philosophy calls for reflection on the creation of the Almighty Allah and perceiving the breathtaking beauty of this universe as everything has an indication to the Almighty Allah.

Hence, when kind acts become a practice in a community – as the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) put it, the beholders will see the true beauty in that and their hearts and souls will be delighted for this scene.

3. The philosophical view of Aristotle on beauty (384 – 322 BC.)

All rationalists agree on the status and position of Aristotle in the world of philosophy and intellect. It would be enough to mention he was the founder of the methodology of reasoning that is also known as logic.

Despite all that, Aristotle did not establish an independent concept about beauty like other philosophers did; he only provided explanation for “a beautiful object” without defining beauty or illustrating its characteristics[3].

The reason perhaps is that he saw art as complementary to the beauty of nature and product of human emotions, therefore art had to be the reflection of virtues and emotions, and its goal had to be teaching moral values and righteousness and not mere entertainment.

There is no doubt that there is a difference between the two

1 Moojaz Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p26.
2 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Mantiq, p38.
3 Moojaz Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p28.

approaches, that is, the approach of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and the approach of Aristotle on beauty. The Master of Martyrs (PBUH) considers kind acts as a means to reformation of both the self and the society, and therefore it is what makes man and society beautiful to the hearts and the eyes of the beholders.

On the other hand, Aristotle considers that it is art that complements and reforms man and ultimately society through its beautiful energy and influence on people.

Now, the common factor between the two approaches is the aesthetic sentiment in human creation in the sense that man is attracted to kindness and disinclined to unkindness. Moreover, people can use their aesthetic sentiment to reform both the self and the society through art.

For example, a painter reflects his aesthetic sense through his brush to the beholders; this way he restores the virtues inside them and reveals the ugliness of vices and unkindness, Also, when a poet composes rhyming poems, he is actually reflecting his aesthetic sense and his reforming role into society.

B – Aesthetics according to Muslim philosophers

1. The philosophical view of Al-Farabi on beauty

The philosophy of Al-Farabi on beauty can be summed up in his emphasis on common sense and physical senses in obtaining knowledge. After that, Al-Farabi moves to discuss the Platonic philosophy as he focuses on “the luminosity of knowledge and innovation via emanation of the vigorous mind that bestows the eternal images, as the perceptual order, with its particulars and its significance, is combined with the ideal luminous emanative order via mental abstraction towards the world of ideals”[1].

This acculturation between the Islamic philosophy and the Platonic philosophy has undoubtedly produced this concept about aesthetics and the means of its attainment by human beings. This is the significant outcome of this acculturation between the two philosophies, since the Greek philosophy most often is concerned with the essential nature of matters, especially when it comes to

1 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p56.

aesthetics, its concept and its significance.

As far as the mechanism of attaining the aesthetic sense is concerned, the Greek philosophy, represented in its aforementioned masterminds, seems to be somehow lacking this major issue.

Conceivably, Baumgarten was the first to take notice of this flaw in Greek philosophy, the fact that motivated him to use the word "Aesthetgue" to refer to the study of the aesthetic sense or the study of perceptual knowledge. Baumgarten was actually trying to establish a methodology for the sensory perception of beauty and to create standards and principles that assist in aesthetic appreciation, following the example of Aristotle in his establishment of logic.

Having said that, we realized that this methodology for the sensory perception of beauty was not absent in the words of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) who talked about the necessity of reformation in the Ummah (Islamic community) of his grandfather, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

Imam Hussein (PBUH) has draw "the sense" and "the sensed" together as it is the case with the philosophy of Al-Farabi on beauty, that is, Imam Hussein (PBUH) linked between the sense of sight and the sensory perception of beauty.

This again reminds us of the three constituents on which the philosophy of Al-Farabi and Plato was based, namely "common sense", "physical senses" and "the emanation of mind". In other words, when the eyes interpret that view into a factor that gives pleasure to the heart and the soul, this means that the luminosity that the soul is now filled with is based on the interaction of the aesthetic sense with the beauty of kindness.

2. The philosophical view of Bin Roshd on beauty

Before we talk about the philosophical view of Bin Roshd on beauty, we would like to point out that the philosophy of Bin Sina on beauty is not basically different from that of Al-Farabi, therefore we can skip the philosophical view of Bin Sina on beauty and move on to discuss the philosophy of Bin Roshd who is known as "the interpreter".

The difference between Bin Roshd and Al-Farabi is methodological in the sense that the philosophy of Bin Roshd is

entirely based on interpretation of the works of Aristotle, the fact that puts his philosophy in compliance with the philosophy of Aristotle. Bin Roshd had a huge contribution through his careful clarification and ample illustration of the constituents of Aristotelian philosophy.

Hence, Bin Roshd did come with a new philosophy or vision about beauty, yet he emphasized that “when something is beautiful, this should not be taken as a value or for granted; this must be inferred through analytical and methodological examination which should also be aware of the fact that it is an organized and united whole that is part of the nature created by the Almighty Allah”[1].

What I would like to point out here is that this intellectual constituent or foundation that looks at beauty as a coherent and organized whole is actually corresponding to the philosophy of Pythagoras (16 BC.) who identifies beauty as the essence of the mechanism for numerical consistency that applies to the simplest as well as the most complex phenomena.

Accordingly, Pythagoras “comes to explicate all sorts of phenomena with natural elements and to explain all existents with the mysteries of numbers. Hence, he tends to define beauty with terms and expressions mostly related to quantity and quality as well as adverbs of place.

Moreover, Pythagoras considers that the beauty of existence lies within mathematical proportions and relationships as well as the precise harmony of the planetary motion”[2].

For that reason, I do not see any big difference between the philosophical view of Bin Roshd on beauty and that of Pythagoras, in the sense that Bin Roshd wants us to consider what is beautiful “as an organized and united whole that is part of the nature created by the Almighty Allah”, and as for Pythagoras, “the beauty of existence lies within mathematical proportions and relationships as well as the precise harmony of the planetary motion”.

In other words, the points of resemblance are:

a) The organized cohesion of Bin Roshd meets with the precise harmony of Pythagoras.

1 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p60.
2 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p41.

b) The nature created by the Almighty Allah meets with the planetary motion of Pythagoras.

Now, even this concept of beauty or this philosophical view on aesthetics comes very close to the philosophy of Imam Hussein (PBUH), in the sense that the center of both "the organized cohesion" and "the precise harmony" is the Almighty Allah Who filled the universe with his beautiful creation.

In this sense, the Shari'a becomes "the organized cohesion" and "the precise harmony", as it remains that beautiful call initiated through the Noble Quran to all knowledge seekers. The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

> *(Do they not then meditate on the Quran? And if it were from any other than Allah, they would have found in it many a discrepancy)*[1].

The Noble Quran, which is the Shari'a of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), has organized cohesion and precise harmony. It also prevents any forms of uncertainty or doubt about the fact that it is from the Almighty Allah Who bestowed beauty upon His coherent and harmonious creation.

In view of the fact that the essence of reformation in the Islamic community (Ummah) comes through restoring the law (Shari'a) of the Noble Quran, the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice proves to be a successful means to achieve this goal in the community. This is because it reflects the lasting beauty of Shari'a in nature and the universe, made by the Almighty Allah.

Therefore, Imam Hussein (PBUH) wanted to restore reason through looking at kindness and its fascinating beauty. Of course, there is no place for unkindness in this cosmic system of beauty which is organized and coherent.

C – Aesthetics according to contemporary philosophers

1. The philosophical view of Descartes on beauty (1650 AD.)

We can define the philosophy of Descartes and his approach to beauty through the following points:

1 4.82

a) Descartes linked between the mind and the sense of appreciation for beauty, therefore it is a relative matter i.e. this realization is different from one person to another depending on the harmony between the mind and the sense.

b) According to Descartes, we cannot beauty identify the nature and the basis for beauty. For example, Indians see beauty in a way different from the Chinese and the same with the Europeans and other nations. So, what appeals to a greater number of people has to be considered beautiful.

c) The only way to comprehend the pleasure of the senses is through the natural sciences, because when the psychological pleasure is taken away, it has a purely physiological nature.

Therefore, "aesthetic pleasure, according to Descartes, has two stages: the sensory stage and the mental stage, as it cannot be shaped without the sense and the pleasure, and that the truth where elements of sense and mind are intertwined together"[1].

What I would like to add here is that this conclusion derived from the philosophy of Descartes on beauty is in harmony with that of Imam Hussein (PBUH) as he focused in his words on the sense of sight when observing beauty: "if you were to see kindness as a man…".

As for the mind, it is connected to the eyes and this eventually creates this overlap between the mind and the sense, and therefore kindness takes a beautiful and pleasant shape to the beholders. This is similar to the "aesthetic pleasure" that distinguishes the philosophical view of Descartes.

Moreover, the philosophical view of Imam Hussein (PBUH) is essentially based on reformation, in the sense that beauty is the means to attain the ultimate end, which is reformation for the sake of a dignified life.

2. The philosophical view of Alexander Baumgarten on beauty (1714 – 1762 AD.)

Alexander Baumgarten is one of the contemporary philosophers who gave vastly studied and analyzed the idea of beauty, as he was

1 Moqaddama Fi 'Ilm Al-Jamaal, p63-64 (not literal).

the first to use the term “Aesthetgue” to refer to this branch of philosophy. Moreover, he attempted to set a form of logic for the beauty of feeling similar to the Aristotelian formal logic in regard to thought or intellect.

“The most significant contribution of Baumgarten to aesthetics is his distinction between the higher knowledge and lower knowledge; the higher knowledge deals with concepts and perceptions that are described as rational and measurable and liked to true state of affairs such as engineering, mathematics and logic. The lower knowledge deals with senses and emotions that are non-measurable and away from logic and allotment. Beauty is considered to be part of the lower knowledge”[1].

I would say here that there is an obvious similarity between this approach on beauty and that of Descartes. In fact, all the views they represent are somehow based on either the Aristotelian philosophy or the Platonic philosophy.

However, they all lead the beholders to one form of knowledge about aesthetics, that is, the mind and the sense are tools created by the Almighty Allah which are intertwined together, and at the same time, complete one another in order to help the beholders see the true beauty.

In addition to that, this mechanism is not different from the mechanism initiated by Imam Hussein (PBUH) to attain this perceptual knowledge through the sight, the mind and the heart, in the sense that the eyes see and the mind analyzes and the heart appreciates and takes pleasure.

3. The philosophical view of Emanuel Immanuel Kant on beauty (1742 – 1804 AD.)

The aesthetic philosophy of Kant gives us this impression that it was based on those foundations expressed by Imam Hussein (PBUH) in regard to the sensory and cognitive knowledge on beauty.

Consequently, “the sense of beauty, according to Kant, took two directions due to the interactions of the mental perception which were discussed in his analysis of sublime intuition.

1 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p65.

These two trends or directions are the primary sense of aesthetics and sublime sense of aesthetics (Special).

The primary sense of beauty is associated with the surrounding environment; it is actually temporary due to the sensory perception that links human beings to their limited environment. Therefore, this sense cannot produce any creative values; it has only instance and limited effects.

Sublime sense of aesthetics is an analytical mental process that uncovers pure facts in all forms and shapes; a very few people have this distinguishing feature that helps them achieve the true beauty (sublime) within themselves and then strive to transfer it to others, although they often fail to do so.

According to Kant, the foundation for the aesthetic appreciation has to do with that perception and realization linked to human mind, which has to be necessarily free from the impurities of material interests or benefits"[1].

Now, if the German philosopher, Kant, had the opportunity to learn about the view of Imam Hussein (PBUH) on beauty, he would have been the first person to adopt it, because he would have discovered that the foundations he put for aesthetic appreciation were already included in the philosophical view of Imam Hussein (PBUH) on beauty.

According to Kant, aesthetic appreciation is attained through "perception, realization – that is linked to human mind – and being free from material interests or benefits". To Imam Hussein (PBUH), aesthetic appreciation is perception through "the sense of sight", realization through "the mind" and being free from material interests or benefits which is indeed the essence of "kindness".

When people do certain kind acts, they mainly hope for a reward in the Hereafter, and therefore they reject material benefits, and sometimes they even give away their wealth and belongings for the Path of Right and the Promotion of Virtue and have to endure the annoyance and harassment of the ignorant.

Therefore, Imam Hussein (PBUH) wanted people to seek aesthetic appreciation in kindness through acting individually or

1 Moqaddama Fi 'Ilm Al-Jamaal, p65-66.

collectively in order to get pleasure from the beauty of a peaceful and dignified life.

4. The philosophical view of Friedrich Hegel on beauty (1770 – 1831 AD.)

Hegel was a controversial figure to many intellectuals and philosophers for his philosophical views.

Some said: "He was the philosophy in the flesh", "the philosopher of all philosophers" and "a giant intellectual that philosophers would seem like dwarfs beside me", but others said: "He was the real killer of philosophy"[1].

As for his aesthetic philosophy, it was based on the realization of what he called the "Absolute Spirit" – a term used in the philosophy of the ideal to refer to an eternal, infinite, unconditional and perfect object.

Friedrich Hegel demonstrates the assumption that "the absolute is the ideal itself" in the sense that it cannot be changed or affected. On the contrary, it changes and affects everything in this universe, because it includes everything in itself, being the source for everything. The absolute, in divine religions, is the Almighty Allah, but in Hegel's philosophy, it is "a spirit based on thought, i.e. the absolute spirit"[2].

Now, what I would like to point out here is that Hegel only claims that the absolute spirit is the basis of thought so that he establishes a view away from the religious views but not necessarily against the belief in the Almighty God, that is, He created man and gave him His blessings, one of which is the blessing of the mind so we can think and appreciate.

Some philosophers like Descartes might preoccupy themselves with their intellectual journey from doubt to certainty, putting into effect the saying, "I think, so I am". Being disposed for physical devotion, Hegel and Descartes, therefore, cannot see another way to connect with this universe.

On the other hand, the Noble Quran and the Prophetic offspring

1 Moqaddama Fi 'Ilm Al-Jamaal, p65-66.
2 Ibid.

(PBUT) urge us to think and reflect on the creation of Almighty Allah. Accordingly, the belief in the Almighty God is interpreted as a disposition for both physical and spiritual worships that are based on thought and appreciation; this is indeed the cognitive integration of beauty.

Having the blessing of mind and reflection, if Hegel had the opportunity to learn about the Noble Quran and the Prophetic Hadith, he might have replaced the term “the Absolute Spirit” with “the Almighty Allah”.

His reflection and elaboration on beauty led him to conclude that “every natural or physical phenomenon and every human or intellectual method in this universe is ultimately a manifestation of the Absolute Spirit”.

Undoubtedly, this is the end result of monotheism that the Noble Quran and Hadith urged us to follow through observation, reflection and appreciation.

In fact, Hegel considered “eyesight the most sublime among human senses as it bestows insight into the heart and the soul”[1].

This conclusion Hegel arrived at in regard to the importance of eyes compared to the other senses and the role eyesight plays in leading people to aesthetic knowledge is in conformity with the view of Imam Hussein (PBUH) when he said to his companions:

> *“Learn that kind acts let you gain praise and later reward; if you were to see kindness as a man, he would be good-looking to the beholders, and if you were to see villainy, he would be distasteful, hideous, deformed and repulsed by beholders”.*

Therefore, the eyes are the basic tools for making distinction between beauty and ugliness, but most philosophers overlooked this fact, that is, they failed to realize how important it is to know and perceive ugliness as it is interrelated with the perception of beauty.

Perceptual knowledge cannot be achieved unless there is a mental interrelation between opposites. It is impossible to realize and appreciate beauty when there is no sense of ugliness; we also cannot know and feel what safety is when we have no sense of fear.

As a matter of fact, the correlation between aesthetics and arts,

1 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Jamaal, p70.

proportions, reflections, absolute spirit, and other matters that we discussed explicates that these are only accessible means to perceive and feel beauty, because human being are by nature attracted to beauty and repulsed by imperfections. Thus, they try to seek beauty in everything surrounding them.

Now, the eyes receive a great significance as they pass this insight into human heart and soul so that we can make a distinction between what is beautiful and what is ugly, of course, on the basis of moral values (kindness and unkindness).

This is what Imam Hussein (PBUH) aimed for in his view on beauty, in man and life, with its various natural, artistic, moral and philosophical aspects.

Therefore, Hegel, Descartes, Al-Farabi, Bin Roshd, Aristotle, Plato and other philosophers would recognize the aesthetic view of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) if they were aware of his knowledge and his words:

“O Lord! How do they make inquiries about You when they require You in their very existence? Can anything be a manifestation of You when they are in need of You? When were You absent at all to be in need of evidence to Your existence? When did You become distant at all so manifestations would show the path to You?

May the eyes that do not see You as their Watcher be blind! May that bargain of a servant that does not grant him a share of Your love suffer loss. O Lord! Take me back to You with the help of the light and the guidance of the insight. You are indeed the All-Powerful”[1].

1 Iqbal Al-A’mal, p339. Bihar Al-Anwar, v95, p226.

Topic Five

The General and Specific Aesthetic Images of ‘Ashura

In this topic, we will explicate to our readers the general picture on both encampments in Karbala in order to pinpoint the true whereabouts of beauty and ugliness, not to mention that such pictures are repeated over time as they carry the same concepts and values.

Afterward, we move on to demonstrate in details the aesthetic features inside the camp of Imam Hussein (PBUH) so that the readers understand that these beautiful characters and faces resemble the same beautiful faces that went for Mobahala (the Supplication) against the Christians of Najran, although the atmosphere surrounding those beautiful and graceful figures was different from the atmosphere and the circumstances surrounding the beautiful figures who accompanied Imam Hussein (PBUH).

First issue: the general aesthetic image of ‘Ashura

What took place on the tenth of Muharram, the year 61 AH, on the land of Karbala presents us with two opposing and completely different pictures. Had it not been for these two conflicting pictures or actually encampments, we would not know about the features and characteristics that distinguish each one of them.

In the encampment of the Master of the Youth of Heaven (PBUH), you see the following features:

You see the beauty that leads you to Heaven. Actually, you see Heaven itself, as you can smell its fragrance and see its palaces and the Maidens – with big lustrous eyes (Hur-el-‘in).

In this camp, they close their eyes and when they open them, they see the faces of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), Imam Ali (PBUH), Imam Hasan (PBUH) and the people of Badr and Honain.

You also see the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) who preceded them to Heaven like Hamza Bin Abdul-Mottalib, Ja’far Al-Taiyar, ‘Ammar Bin Yasir, Abu Zar Al-Ghafari, Salman Al-Mohammadi, Hojr Bin ‘Adi and many others.

You see the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH), such as Anas Bin Harith Al-Kaheli, Habib Bin Modhahir and Moslim Bin ‘Awsaja, waiting to join the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and his companions.

In this camp, they see the Maidens (Hur-el-‘in) as if they are well-guarded pearls and such delicate companions sitting in tents waiting impatiently for their arrival; those brides are then carried in procession to their homes while they observe their beauty and smell their fragrance, then they adorn themselves for the wedding that is worthy of grooming[1].

Here, they had their houses in Heaven revealed for them.

Here, some had their black color and their smell changed to something even better than musk as one could notice it from a far distance.

Here is the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) who quenches their thirst from Al-Kawthar (a river in Heaven).

Here is Archangel Jibrail announces the death of finest people while Mikail and Israfil weep over them.

Here is where beautiful tears run down like pearls on those cheeks that neither the heat nor the dust could alter.

Here is where the tears moisten the lips and cheeks.

Here, (You will recognize in their faces the brightness of bliss)[2].

Here are the Noble Quran and the Prophethood.

Here are Imamate and Infallibility.

Here is the martyred Hussein (PBUH).

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1 Rijal Al-Kashi, p53, Printed in India; you can read more about the pleasure and the longing the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) had for their weddings in Heaven.

2 83.24

Here are the men who keep their pledge to Allah.

Here where they die for the love of the household of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

Here they see the beauty in death and hasten to meet death so that they achieve what the Messengers (PBUH) spoke about:

> *"Whosoever dies with affection for the household of Mohammad – Ahl Al-Bait (PBUH), they die as martyrs. Whosoever dies with affection for the household of Mohammad, they die forgiven. Whosoever dies with affection for the household of Mohammad, they die repentant.*
>
> *Whosoever dies with affection for the household of Mohammad, they die fully believers. Whosoever dies with affection for the household of Mohammad, the Angel of Death will bring them the news of Heaven, and so will Monkar and Nakeer.*
>
> *Whosoever dies with affection for the household of Mohammad, they will be carried to Heaven like when a bride is carried in procession to her husband's house. Whosoever dies with affection for the household of Mohammad, Allah will send angels to visit their graves.*
>
> *Whosoever dies with affection for the household of Mohammad, they die as believers to the Sunna of the Prophet (PBUH). Whosoever dies with dislike for the household of Mohammad, they come on the Day of Judgment while written on their forehead: hopeless of the Mercy of the Almighty Allah"*[1].

They indeed achieved what the Messengers (PBUH) spoke about.

On the other side where the encampment of the opponents and the injustice, any wise person can see a different picture with absolutely contradictory features to the first one:

There, you see the ugliness that leads to the Fire.

In the other encampment, (Hell shall be made manifest to him who

1 Al-'Omda, Bin Al-Batriq, p54. Sa'd Al-Sa'oud, Bin Tawous, p141. Bihar, v27, p111. Al-Kashaaf Al-Zamakhshari, v3, p467. Tafsir Al-Tha'labi, v8, p314. Tafsir Al-Razi, v27, p165. Tafsir Bin Al-'Arabi, v2, p219. Tafsir Al-Qortobi, v16, p23. Tafsir Al-Tha'alabi, v5, p157. Fadh Aal Al-Bait, Al-Maqrizi, p128. Al-Fosoul Al-Mohimma, Bin Al-Sabbagh, v1, p593.

sees)[1] among them, and (when it shall come into their sight from a distant place, they shall hear its vehement raging and roaring)[2].

There, (when the fetters and the chains shall be on their necks; they shall be dragged)[3] ruthlessly by the angels to Hell.

There stands the core of oppression and injustice toward Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT).

There, you see (…a fire, the curtains of which shall encompass them about; and if they cry for water, they shall be given water like molten brass which will scald their faces; evil the drink and ill the resting-place)[4].

There stands the first, the second and the third leaders of the tyrannical army of the 'Obaidullah Bin Ziad.

There, (…so oft as their skins are thoroughly burned, We will change them for other skins, that they may taste the chastisement)[5].

There, (they shall have a bed of hell-fire and from above them coverings of it; and thus do We reward the unjust)[6].

There, when they become thirsty, they (…shall be given to drink of festering water)[7].

There, they (…shall be dragged)[8] with a chain (the length of which is seventy cubits)[9], and also (for them are whips of iron)[10].

Thus, we have two camps with two pictures, one here and one there, as (these are two adversaries who dispute about their Lord; then as to those who disbelieve, for them are cut out garments of fire, boiling water shall be poured over their heads)[11].

Now, between these two camps and between these two pictures, there was a man standing with a choice between Heaven and Hell.

1 79.36
2 25.12
3 40.71
4 18.29
5 4.56
6 7.41
7 14.16
8 40.71
9 69.32
10 22.21
11 22.19

Since he was a free man like his name, “Al-Hor”, and since he had a heart that could distinguish between right and wrong, eyes that could see beauty, ears that could hear the rustle of trees in Heaven as well as the poisonous storms of fire, he refused to lower himself to the level of those who were as cattle, and therefore, he was raised up to Heaven where he could meet the Master of Martyrs (PBUH).

We should follow the example of Al-Hor Bin Yazid Al-Riahi, that passionate lover who saw the true beauty of those faces that “if asked God to remove a mountain, He would remove it for them” as he consequently gave his life for that on the day of ‘Ashura.

Second issue: the specific aesthetic image of ‘Ashura

The epic of ‘Ashura has also a specific image in the sense that we have a whole beautiful picture and we have specific images of the offspring of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) as well as Abu Talib (PBUH).

In their narrations of the tragic incident of Al-Taf, historians showed interest in describing the beauty of the offspring of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), namely Imam Hussein and his sons, his nephew, Al-Qasim, and the sons of the Ali Bin Abi Talib, Al-‘Abbas and his brothers (PBUT).

It is as if history repeats itself and we have another Mobahala (the Supplication); some of the faces as well as the opponents might be different, but their beauty and their sanctity are still the same before the Almighty Allah. The following is a description of each of those beautiful figures.

A – The beauty of Al-Qasim, the son of Imam Al-Hassan Al-Mojtaba (PBUT)

This is how Hameed Bin Moslim describes the appearance of Al-Qasim, the son of Imam Al-Hassan Bin Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUT): “A young man came to us with a face like a piece of the moon and a sword in his hand; he was wearing a shirt, a loincloth and a pair of slippers”[1].

1 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p341. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf, p169. Al-Fotouh, Bin A’tham, v5, p112. Maqatil Al-Talibiyeen, Abi Al-Faraj, p58. Sharh Al-Akhbar, v3, p179. Al-Irshad, Al-Mofid, v2, p107.

There are several noticeable points in this description of Hameed Bin Moslim:

1. When he describes the beauty of Al-Qasim Bin Al-Hasan (PBUT) as “a face like a piece of the moon”, he actually draws a comparison between Al-Qasim and his grandfather, the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

Sheikh Al-Kolaini reported from Bin Miskan, from Isma’il Bin ‘Ammar that Abu Abdullah (PBUH) said: “The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) had this luminosity in dark nights as if he was a piece[1] of the moon”[2].

Accordingly, when the beautiful face of Al-Qasim (PBUH) is described as “a piece of the moon”, we are actually referring to the light radiating from his face, because the beauty of the moon lies in its glorious light.

2. In fact, Hameed Bin Moslim was in the encampment of the enemies, yet he could the beautiful face of Al-Qasim (PBUH) emitting light despite the severity and the intensity of the midday sunlight.

3. The narrator gave a description of the clothing that Al-Qasim was wearing: “a shirt, a loincloth and a pair of slippers”, which implies that Bin Moslim noticed that Al-Qasim was not prepared for a war because he was not wearing any form of protection. Now, this is very significant as it emphasizes on the fact that:

a) he was not required to join Holy Wars (Jihad) in the first place for not reaching puberty.

b) there were few people supporting and defending the sanctity of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and this forced upon children to take part.

c) the opponents were so ruthless and heartless that they could kill defenseless children like Al-Qasim (PBUH).

1 The Arabic word, “Shiqqa”, is one half of a thing when split (Lisan Al-‘Arab, v10, p182). It is also said that “Shiqqat Qamar” is a piece of the moon (Majma’ Al-Bahrain, v5, p195). Actually, the closest meaning can be from the Arabic word “Shaqaeq Al-No’man” – anemone or windflower. Al-No’man meaning blood is due to the color of a flower that is as red as blood, and therefore the word Shiqqa is from the name of this flower which is vastly known as Shaqaeq (Lisan Al-‘Arab, v10, p182).

2 Al-Kafi, v1, p446.

d) Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH) did not come for war bringing along his family, among them were women and children. On the contrary, he brought them to reform the society that was getting corrupted after the death of the Prophet (PBUH).

Consequently, Al-Qasim (PBUH) was indeed one of the beautiful and graceful figures on the epic day of ‘Ashura, as he resembled the beauty of those figures that “if asked God to remove a mountain, He would remove it for them”.

B – The beauty of Ali Al-Akbar, the son of Imam Hussein (PBUT)

The person who gives the description about the beauty of Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH) here is Al-Hussein Bin Ali Bin Abu Talib (PBUH) himself. Of course, Imam Hussein (PBUH) is his father, but his description is not a compliment to his son, because he is also an infallible Imam who has religious responsibility and what he says reflects the exact reality.

In view of that, we first need to learn about the beauty of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) because Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH) had the largest resemblance, physically and morally, to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) among all people.

Imam Hussein (PBUH) said: “We looked at him whenever we longed for Your Prophet”.

This actually refers to the exact reproduction and not only the similarity between Ali Al-Akbar and Messenger of Allah (PBUT). In other words, he had the exact same beauty as the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

Therefore, the resemblance between Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH) and his grandfather, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), was not only in some physical and behavioral aspects but it was the exact reproduction with no difference at all.

This also reveals the amount of pain the loss of Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH) left on the household of the Prophet (PBUT) and especially on his father, Imam Hussein (PBUH).

C – The beauty of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Sheikh Al-Tousi – May God bless his soul – reported from Imam Ali Bin Mousa, from Ja'far, from his father, from his grandfather that Imam Ali (PBUT) was told that: "O Ali! Describe our Prophet (PBUH) for us as if we could actually see him because we long for him. He said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) had reddish white skin, black eyes, thick beard and abundant hair, a neck like a silver jug, delicate hair like a rod from the chest down to the navel but no other hair on the chest or the abdomen; he also had coarse hands, feet and ankles.*
>
> *When the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) walked, it was like pulling out rocks, and when he advanced, it was like coming down a slope. If he turned around, his entire body turned around. He was not too tall or too short, as he had a round face. The sweat on his face was like pearls that smelled even better than musk.*

He was neither weak nor wicked but the most generous and complaisant among people. Everyone mixed with him loved him, and everyone saw his sharpness feared him and the blaze in his eyes. I have never ever seen like the Messenger of Allah (PBUB)"[1].

All this beauty and all these significant remarks were noted in the character of Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH). In other words, Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH) was indeed one of the beautiful figures on the day of 'Ashura, as he also resembled the beauty of those faces who went for Mobahala (the Supplication) against the Christians of Najran.

Now, one might ask if this physical and moral resemblance between Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH) is even possible. We can answer in two ways:

1 Al-Amali, Al-Tousi – May God bless his soul, p341. Al-Kafi, v1, p443 – reported from Imam Al-Baqir (PBUH). Mosnad Zaid Bin Ali, p429. 'Oyoun Akhbar Al-Ridha, Al-Sadouq, v2, p383. Ma'ani Al-Akhbar, p81. Manaqib Al-Imam Ali (PBUH), Al-Koufi, p19. Makarim Al-Akhlaq, Al-Tabarsi, p12. Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr, v1, p135. Al-Bihar, v16, p144 & p165. Mawsou'at Kalimat Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), p684. Mosnad Ahmad Bin Hanbal, v1, p96 & p101 & p190. Sonan Al-Tormozi, v5, p259-260. Majma' Al-Zawaed, Al-Haithami, v8, p272. Al-Mosannaf, Bin Abi Shaiba, v7, p445. Al-Shamael Al-Mohammadiya, Al-Tormozi, p17. Sahih Bin Haiyan, v14, p217. Al-Shifaa, Al-Qadhi 'Aiyadh, v1, p106. Al-Istizkar, Bin Abdul-Bir, v8, p331. Asad Al-Ghaba, v1, p25.

First of all, scientific studies, particularly in the field of genetic engineering, have referred to the possibility of a full transfer of hereditary characteristics from one person to another through the chromosomes that contain the genes. In other words, the natural components God created in our genes are able to transfer such similarity and at this high level.

Second of all, the Noble Hadith told us that Ja’far Bin Abi Talib (PBUH), the cousin of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), “had the largest resemblance, physically and morally, to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) among all people”[1].

Now, scientifically speaking, the resemblance between the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and Ja’far Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) is less likely to happen than between the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH); this is because the Prophet and Ja’far (PBUT) are cousins but the Prophet and Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH) are grandfather and grandson.

Therefore, it is more probable for the hereditary characteristics to transfer between the Prophet Mohammad and his grandson, Ali Al-Akbar (PBUH). This consequently means that Ja’far Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) indeed had the largest resemblance, physically and morally, to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) among all people[2].

D – The beauty of Al-‘Abbas Bin Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUT)

History does not provide us with an exact description of the beauty of Al-‘Abbas Bin Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUT). However, we can draw an eye-catching image for this unique figure. In fact, the Almighty Allah gathered all the merits of Bani Hashim in the face of Al-‘Abbas (PBUH) so much that he was named “Qamar Bani Hashim – the moon of Hashim offspring”[3].

It seems that Al-‘Abbas (PBUH) inherited the beauty of his father, Amir Al-Mu’menin, Ali Bin Abu Talib (PBUH) whose face was like “a

1 Al-Bihar, v22, p275. Al-Isti’ab, Bin Abdul-Bir, v1, p242. Sharh Mosnad Abi Hanifa, Molla Ali Al-Qari, p539. Al-Ikmal Fi Asmaa Al-Rijal, Bin Makola, p37. Maqatil Al-Talibiyeen, Al-Asfahani, p56.

2 Ibid

3 Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr, v4, p107. Al-Bihar, v45, p39. Maqatil Al-Talibiyeen, Abi Al-Faraj Al-Asfahani, p56. Al-‘Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p282.

full moon"[1]. He also inherited the beauty of his grandfather, Abdul-Mottalib (PBUH); Abraha, who came to demolish the Sacred House, was dazzled by the handsomeness of Abdul-Mottalib (PBUH) as he was charmingly huge[2].

Therefore, these aesthetic elements, gathered in Al-'Abbas Bin Ali (PBUT), are quite unique so much that he was described as: "a charmingly huge man riding a very beautiful horse, while his feet dragging on the ground"[3].

Now, the Arabic word "Waseem" (handsome) is from "Wasama" meaning branded or marked with an attractive face and regular features[4].

Moreover, the aesthetic meaning intended in the description of his horse is that even the horse he was riding was of complete and perfect beauty[5].

This demonstrates the fact that Abul-Fadhl Al-'Abbas (PBUH) was very tall, a feature that made him distinguishable from others so much that despite the perfection and the height of his horse, his feet were dragging on the ground.

A careful observation of the description on the physical capacity of Al-'Abbas can lead to the conclusion that the Almighty Allah put this quality and advantage specifically in Al-'Abbas (PBUH) in order to create a balance in military powers.

In fact, Al-Shimr Bin Zil-Jawshan tried to convince Al-'Abbas and his brothers (PBUT) into leaving the battlefield through a letter of immunity from 'Obaidullah Bin Ziad arguing that their mother was from Bani Asad; they failed because it was the will of God to keep the

1 This description and other characteristics were mentioned by Bin Hojr in Tahzib Al-Tahzib: v7, p297, reporting from Bin Abdul-Bir on his description of the beauty of Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH).

2 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v1, p53. Published by Al-A'lami. Tafsir Bin Abi Al-Sa'oud, v9, p200.

3 Maqatil Al-Talibiyeen, Abi Al-Faraj Al-Asfahani, p56. Al-Bihar, v45, p39. Al-'Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p282. Lawa'ej Al-Ashjan, Saiyed Mohsin Al-Ameen, p179. Ma'alim Al-Madrasatain, Al-'Askari, v3, p129. Mostadrak 'Ilm Al-Rijal, Al-Shahroudi, v4, p350. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf, p176. A'yan Al-Shi'a, Saiyed Mohsin Al-Ameen, v7, p430.

4 Lisan Al-'Arab, Bin Mandhour, v12, p637.

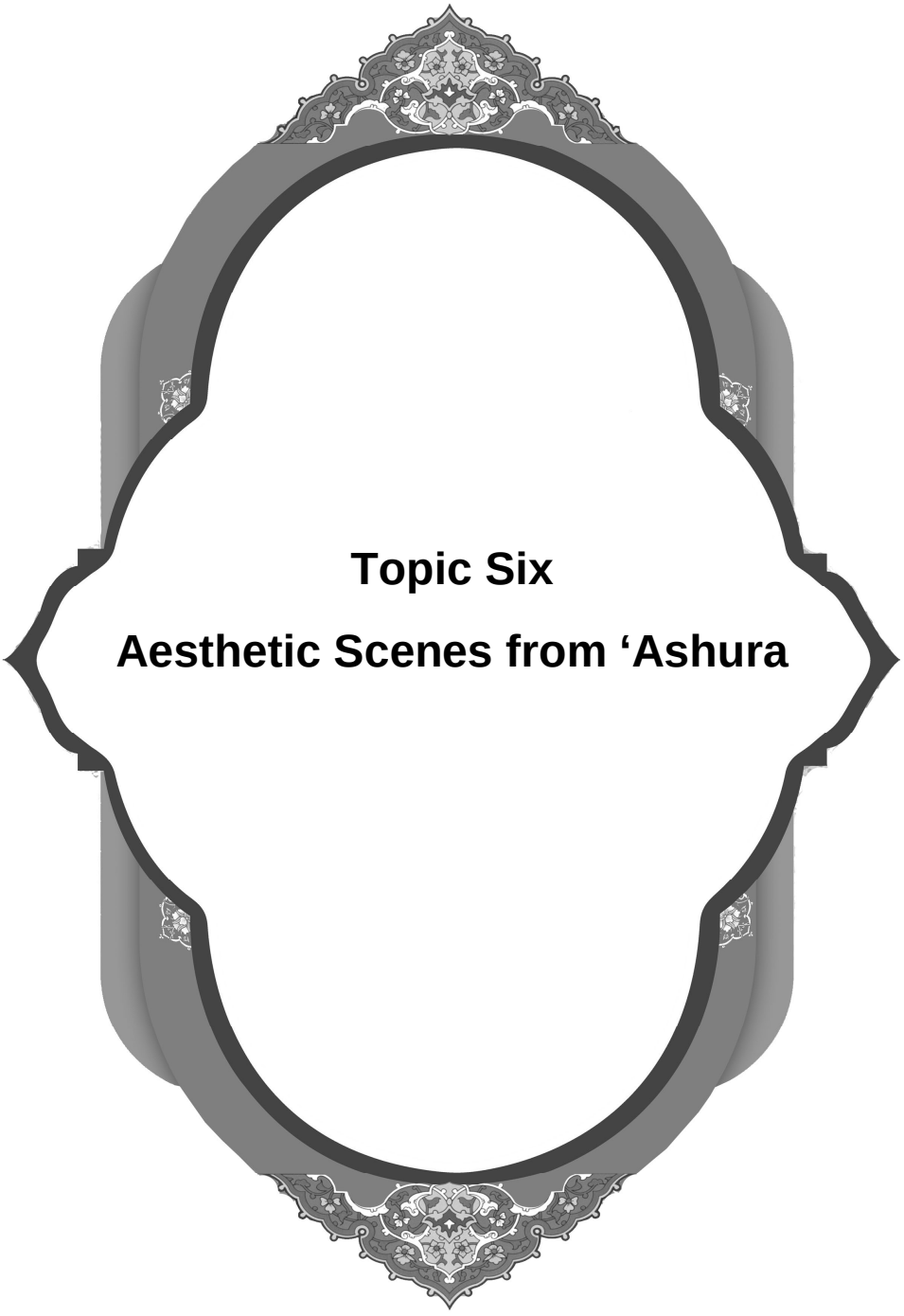
5 Lisan Al-'Arab, Bin Mandhour, v12, p372.

balance of power.

Accordingly, we can consider Abul-Fadhl Al-‘Abbas (PBUH) one of the beautiful and graceful figures that resembled the beauty of those figures that if asked God to remove a mountain, He would remove it for them.

However, the difference between the day of Mobahala in the city of Najran and the day of ‘Ashura in the city Karbala is that these graceful figures were chosen by the Almighty Allah to be covered in their blood and soiled with dust, in scorching heat of Al-Taf, in order for them to support the religion of the Lord.

We have already presented the beauty of Imam Hussein (PBUH), but in the next our next topic, we will provide our dear readers with a description of the beauty of this great leader on the desert of Karbala when the heat and the dust and also the spears and the arrows and the swords of the soldiers and the hooves of their horses all joined forces in vain to alter his beauty, his grace and his attraction.



Topic Six

Aesthetic Scenes from ‘Ashura

There are numerous aesthetic scenes in the land of Al-Taf in regard to outward appearance as well as human values and vital situations, in the sense that each one of these situations paved the way for a new life on this planet. In other words, these beautiful scenes are based on reformation of man in order to reform everything else and create a new and better life.

As a matter of fact, it is a very difficult task to count all the aesthetic scenes associated with the day of ‘Ashura for the perception of beauty varies from a beholder to another depending on their sentimental sense. Therefore, some people might see no beauty at all and some see beauty in every single grain of the sand in Karbala; some others also see the beauty of ‘Ashura revolving around Imam Hussein (PBUH) like a neutron revolving around the nucleus because it represents its source of energy and inspiration.

Moreover, the concept of beauty varies depending on the way the beholder is looking at the epic of ‘Ashura. This is because ‘Ashura was a stage that not only included beautiful images but all images of life, so when one attains knowledge of beauty, they will also be able to distinguish ugliness and understand it.

In view of that, Karbala was unique in its tragedies and calamities as much as it was unique in its collection of both beautiful and ugly scenes; each beautiful scene has an opposing ugly scene or image and vice versa, in the sense that the ugliness of injustice is indicative of the beauty of justice and the beauty of honesty is indicative of the ugliness of dishonesty.

Therefore, in Karbala, we see knowledge and ignorance,

monotheism and polytheism, faith and hypocrisy, love and hatred, determination and hesitation, courage and cowardice, magnanimity and villainy, nobility and treachery, tolerance and intolerance, fairness and tyranny, trust in God and mistrust in Him.

This is in addition to leniency and violence, forgiveness and vengeance, sympathy and hostility, modesty and arrogance, acceptance and rejection, and chastity and voracity, contentment and discontent, generosity and stinginess, honesty and betrayal, honesty and dishonesty, slavery and freedom, pride and humiliation, and many other opposing scenes that help us distinguish between what is beautiful and what is ugly.

In this topic, we will provide our dear readers with these scenes and images starting from the night before Tasu’a – the night before ‘Ashura – and ending with the very day of ‘Ashura.

First issue: the magical beauty of the night before 'Ashura

It is the night before 'Ashura[1] as the darkness spreads through the night and casts its tranquility over creatures that quiet down and hope for its kindness; they seem to be waiting, perhaps for who would wait with them or perhaps for who could relieve much of their loneliness by telling them stories like the ones told by grandmothers to their grandchildren.

These creature, including human beings, could be listening to the

1 Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) was asked about fasting on Tasu'a and 'Ashura. He said: Tasu'a is the day Al-Hussein (PBUH) and his companions – May God be pleased with them – were besieged in Karbala as the horsemen from Shaam (current Syria) attacked him. Bin Marjana and 'Omar Bin Sa'd were delighted to see the large number of horsemen; they made sure no one from Iraq would support him and his companions, therefore Hussein (PBUH) was deemed to be weak. 'Ashura is a day when Hussein (PBUH) and his companions were on the ground slaughtered. Would be any fasting that day? No, by the God of the Sacred House! It is not a fasting day. It is not but a grieving day; it is a calamity fell on the people of heavens and earth and on all the believers. It is a delightful and happy day for Bin Marjana and the kinfolk of Ziad and the people of Shaam – May God be angry with them and their offspring. It was a day when all places wept over him except one. Whosoever fasts in this day or sees it as a good omen, Allah shall gather them on the Day of Gathering with the kinfolk of Ziad; those are hypocrites as they and their household shall be deprived of the Mercy of Allah and the Satan shall share everything they have (Wasael Al-Shi'a, Section 21, Min Al-Sawm Al-Mandoub – on advisable fasting).

Also, Mohammad Bin 'Isa Bin 'Obaid reported that Ja'far Bin 'Isa said: "I asked Al-Riza (PBUH) about fasting on the day of 'Ashura and what people say about it. He said: Are you asking me about the fasting of Bin Marjana? The adopted sons among the kinfolk of Ziad fasted that day in order to kill Al-Hussein (PBUH). The household of Mohammad (PBUT) see it as an evil portent and so do the Muslims, and therefore Muslims neither fast on this day nor regard it a good omen" (Al-Kafi, v4, p146, Published by Dar Al-Kotob Al-Islamiya. Al-Tahzib, v4, p301).

stars twinkling them stories from up in the heavens with their blue and white flashes, stories about their unusual and infinite world that take man’s imagination far away where they watch the inhabitants of the earth. Their imagination may also exchange stars with stories from man’s unusual world.

However, the difference between the two stories is that the first took place in the world of heavens where twinkling stars tell us about goodness, security and purity, and the second happened in the world of man whose heroes are a group of people exercising evil and spreading terror in order to replace the smiles of mothers with groans over their slaughtered children.

Now, the story we are about to hear is not imaginary or fictional; it is a true story of men from different places, races, colors, and purposes came together to kill one man and exterminate all his family and followers.

When the curtain rises, we have two completely different and opposing scenes just as night and day.

Scene One: a group of men gathered to perform the ritual ablution and purify themselves getting prepared to meet their beloved ancestors. They were sitting in ranks as if they were a firm and compact wall reciting the Book of Allah slowly; their eyes were fixed to the heavens while shedding tears abundantly. This scene was full of life as the desert of Karbala was adorned with well-aligned horses and lofty spears and lion-like men whose roar would shake the mountains.

Scene Two: A group of men whose mouths painted with filthy drinks and their faces were “veiled with darkness”[1], villainy and disgrace. They were standing with bodies like “trunks of hollow palms”[2]. Their eyes were reddened from their evil deeds, intoxication and staying up all night. Once again, they were preparing themselves to drink from the blood of the most righteous people, to chew their livers and hearts and to annihilate the heritage of the Prophets (PBUT). This scene was full of death. Now, here is the heroic tale of ‘Ashura.

1 80.41
2 69.7

Second issue: some of the aesthetic scenes from the day of ‘Ashura

Scene One: the beauty of companionship in ‘Ashura

The beauty of companionship can only be realized by loyal fellows, and ‘Ashura has a special story with such beauty. The person who resembled the beauty of Al-Mostafa (PBUH) was aware of this beauty among his companions, as he said: *“I know no companions better and more loyal than my companion”*[1].

There was a unique aesthetic image among the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) which was due to their loyalty and devotion to the last breath; it was a beauty exclusive to ‘Ashura that have lasted through time and fascinated the beholders with its pleasantly unprecedented images.

One of these images manifested itself in ‘Amr Bin Qordha Al-Ansari – May God be pleased with him – who asked Imam Hussein (PBUH) for permission to fight. Soon as this loyal companion received permission, he attacked the enemy and fought with a great passion as he killed a large number of Bin Ziad’s troops.

He was also protecting Imam Hussein (PBUH) with his own body receiving the arrows and the swords so much so that he was weakened due to numerous deep wounds. At this moment, ‘Amr Bin Qordha turned to Imam Hussain (PBUH) and said: O son of the Messenger of Allah! Have I fulfilled my duty to you?! He said: *“Yes, you are ahead of me in Heaven, so give the Messenger of Allah*

1 Al-Irshad, Sheikh Al-Mofid – May God rest him in peace, p231. Al-Kafi Fil-Tarikh, v2, p559.

(PBUH) my best regards and let him know I am coming”[1].

Despite his serious wounds, ‘Amr Bin Qordha Al-Ansari – May God rest him in peace – persisted in fighting until he was killed. Indeed, no other place would ever witness such a beautiful scene of companionship.

Scene Two: the beauty of devotion and keeping good relations among the household

The time we spend at home with our families in a friendly atmosphere provides us with very beautiful images. This should also remind us of the true beauty of the household that appeared in Karbala and on the day of ‘Ashura when they expressed their devotion and commitment to the master of the house and its supporting pillar, Imam Hussein (PBUH).

The manifestations of this aesthetic image captivated the beholders for a very long time as it was the sun followed by the planets in order to reflect its light. One of these manifestations is when Imam Hussein (PBUH), being the guardian and custodian of the household of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), addressed his companions and his household:

> *“The night has come, so take it as a camel*[2]*; every man takes his fellow or one of my brothers and disperses in the darkness of this night. Leave me with these people, as they seek no one else but me; if they could seize me and kill me, they would not want you”*[3]*.*

Also in a narration by Al-Majlisi, Imam Hussein (PBUH) said: *“This is the night, so take it as a camel and disperse in its darkness; these people only want me, and if they could seize me, they would leave the others”*[4].

This beauty scene of companionship, paternity and guardianship

1 Al-Lahouf, p46. Motheer Al-Ahzan, p61. Bihar Al-Anwar, v40, p22. Al-‘Awalim, v17, p265. A’yan Al-Shi’a, Saiyed Mohsin Al-Ameen, v1, p605. Mawsou’at Kalimat Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), p442.

2 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v3, p315, Published by Dar Al-Kotob Al-Islamiya. Al-Irshad, v1, p231. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, v2, p559.

3 Al-Fotouh, Bin A’tham, v5, p105. Al-tabari, v3, p365. A’yan Al-Shi’a, v1, p600.

4 Al-Bihar, v44, p315.

on the part of Imam Hussein (PBUH) produced an effect upon those righteous people like when the sun spreads its light out to the surrounding planets so that the beholders would be able to see those shining pearls.

Now, let us see the beauty of their position and their attitude. Al-'Abbas Bin Ali (PBUT) said to him: How can we do that? Is it to stay after you?! God never let us see that.

After that, the brothers and the sons of Imam Hussein (PBUT) and his nephew, Imam Hassan's son, Al-Qasim (PBUT), as well as the two sons of Abdullah Bin Ja'far, Mohammad and Abdullah, each came forward at spoke in the same way. At this point, Imam Hussein (PBUH) said: *"O sons of 'Aqeel! You will be killed like Moslim. I give you permission so you can go"*.

They said: What would people say? They would say that we abandoned our sheik and our leader. We keep good relations with our cousins, and so we will shoot arrows, stab our spears and strike our swords side by side with our cousins. By God, we will not leave you! We will give our lives, our wealth and sons for you. We will fight with you and have your fate, so may God make living after you ugly.

Moslim Bin 'Awsaja Al-Asadi also stood up and said: How can we leave you and what would our excuse be before Allah?! I swear I will break my spear in their chests and strike them with my swords to the last breath, but I will not leave you. Even if I did not have any weapon to fight them with, I would throw stones at them to defend you until I die with you!

Moreover, Sa'eed Bin Abdullah Al-Hanafi: "By God, we will stand by you so God knows we protected you in the absence of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). By God, even if I knew I would be killed and burned to ashes, and then come to life to experience this seventy times, I would never stop defending you. So, how would I not defend you knowing that I will be killed once?! After all, it is about dignity that never has expiry"[1].

What was more beautiful than these words was the way they were brought into effect in the morning of 'Ashura as they were competing

1 Mawsou'at Kalimat Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), p400-401. Al-Irshad, p231. Tarikh Al-Tabari, v3, p315. Al-Kamil Fil-tarikh, v2, p315. Al-'Awalim, v17, p344. Waq'at Al-Taf, p198.

with one another to support and defend their Imam like when the entire beehive devotes themselves in defense of their drone[1].

These aesthetic scenes carry so many notions that, to our days, have been the source and inspiration for passionate intellectuals.

Scene Three: the beauty of a wife supporting and protecting her husband

There was another aesthetic scene appeared in ‘Ashura that gave a special meaning to the presence of a wife in a family. In fact, every responsible person in family, be it the father, the mother, the son, the husband and the wife, was put to the test in this day.

One of these extraordinary scenes in which a wife is completely supportive of her husband is when we see the wife of Zohair Bin Al-Qain – May God rest him in peace – trying to protect and preserve him from making a serious mistake.

When the messenger of Imam Hussein (PBUH) came to him asking him to answer the call of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH), Zohair Bin Al-Qain was hesitant whether to answer his call or not; he was not sure what was the right thing to do fearing to make the wrong decision that could enrage the Almighty Allah and His Messenger (PBUH).

At this moment, his wife came along to relieve him of his hesitation and saved him from a decision that would lead him astray. The words she said to him put an end to his uncertainty as he made sure that joining Imam Hussein (PBUH) would definitely satisfy the Almighty Allah and His Messenger (PBUH). When signs of confusion appeared on his face, she came to him and said: “Glory be to Allah! The son of the Messenger of Allah sends for you and you do not answer it”.

Zohair Bin Al-Qain had his tent removed without delay and headed delightfully towards Imam Hussein (PBUH); he settled next to the tent of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and joined him in the fight[2].

In fact, Imam Hussein (PBUH) reminded him of the Hadith from

1 The Arabic word “Ya’soub” means the drone which is a male bee (Lisan Al-‘Arab, v1, p342).

2 Al-Akhbar Al-Tiwal, Al-Dainouri, p246.

the noble companion, Salman Al-Mohammadi – May God be pleased with him, when they together defeated the enemies in the Holy Battle of Belanger; as they were celebrating their victory, Salman turned to Zohair and said:

"If you have managed to join the Master of the Youth of the Household of Mohammad (PBUH), you should be very joyful to fight with him for the spoils you obtain. As for me, I bid you farewell"[1].

Therefore, due to the support and protection of his wife, Zohair was able to shift from hesitation to certainty as he attained the greatest pleasure that lay within the satisfaction of the Almighty Allah and His Messenger (PBUH).

Scene Four: the beauty of forbearance despite calamity

One of the manifestations of beauty on the day of 'Ashura is seen where we might least expect; it is forbearance and tolerance in the midst of calamities. Most people create a sorrowful image of 'Ashura due to the great deal of grief and agony. There were, in fact, certain situations appeared in 'Ashura where tranquility and disturbance were joined at one and the same time.

It is very unique in this life to see emotional and disturbing scenes and still be endowed with serenity and tranquility when everyone expects confusion and disturbance. This is what makes 'Ashura unique and this is what makes Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) unique.

Therefore, one of beautiful images manifested itself in the epic of 'Ashura is the beauty of the calamity! Psychologically and socially speaking, calamities are usually depressing and painful, that is why people always cautious not to experience one through seeking advice from wise people or resorting to prayers and charities. But, when a calamity takes place, they have only two options: either forbearance or disturbance.

Forbearance is quite admired by many people, yet many more

1 Al-Irshad, Sheikh Al-Mofid – May God be pleased with him, v2, p73. Motheer Al-Ahzan, Bin Nima Al-Hilli, p34. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v44, p372. Al-'Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p222. Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p399. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, v4, p42. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf, p75. Mo'jam Ma Osto'jam, Bakri Al-Andalosi, v1, p276. Al-Dor Al-Nadheem, Bin Hatem Al-'Ameli, p548. Al-Majalis Al-Fakhira, 'Allama Sharafiddin, p221.

also take no notice of its place of existence. In other words, if patience or forbearance is to take form so one can see its beauty, how is it going to be?! This beauty can be noticed at the times of calamities and adversities; it can also manifest itself when we show self-restraint and repel foul desires and inclinations or when we conceal our longing for the beloved ones, and so on.

The believers do not see their ordeals and calamities in terms of pain and sorrow rather than a means for testing their tolerance and patience, and consequently it is a beautiful thing as far as the Almighty Allah will relieve them of their grief and agony.

Now, the stronger this belief is, the more beautiful patience will be in adversities and calamities; it depends on how we look at it and how strong our beliefs are. Therefore, what might worry some beholders is actually considered beautiful by certain believers, especially the companions and the household of the Messenger of Allah (PBUT).

In view of that, we can say that history witnessed no calamity or diversity greater than that of Imam Hussein (PBUH) in Karbala and on the day of ‘Ashura. At the same time, history witnessed no patience or forbearance greater than that of Imam Hussein (PBUH) on the day of ‘Ashura.

It is enough evidence to recall the words of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) when his infant son was slaughtered in his lap*: “What happened is easy to me as far as it is before the Almighty Allah”*[1].

As far as it is before the Almighty Allah, the beauty of forbearance manifests itself in its highest forms so much that it becomes the motive and the reason that reduces the severity of the calamity.

Scene Five: the beauty of steadiness despite fierce battle

One of the meanings offered by linguists for the word “Malhama” (epic) is: a fierce battle with immense killing[2].

If we go through the history of nations searching for such fierce battles which caused states and armies to fall apart and collapse, and if we look at all the immense killings took place in each of those

1 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram – May God bless his soul, p288.

2 Lisan Al-‘Arab, Bin Mandhour, v12, p537.

battles, we find that the battle of Al-Taf is the fiercest and bloodiest of them all.

The reason is that more than thirty thousand[1] cavalrymen and infantrymen gathered against a group of less than a hundred men along with their women and children, besieged them, fell upon them and fought them as they did not even spare a six-month infant; they also crushed the body of his father under their horses' hooves[2] in front of his daughters and sisters!

Indeed, the battle of Al-Taf is the greatest epic and the bloodiest of all.

Despite this depressing and gloomy image of blood mixed with sand, a beautiful and graceful picture glared; it was the steadiness and determination of the companions and the household of Imam Hussein (PBUT).

Their enemies were of aware of this, as one of the commanders, namely 'Amr Bin Al-Hajjaj, began calling for help after his horsemen failed to find a breach in the ranks of these steadfast warriors.

It was near midday when 'Amr Bin Al-Hajjaj cried out at his soldiers: "Do you know who you are fighting? The warriors of the land, discerning and death-defying people who, by God, will kill every one of you despite their small number. You cannot kill them unless you throw stones at them"!

Here 'Omar Bin Sa'd, the general commander of the army, said: "True! You are completely right. Tell the soldiers not to challenge any of their men, or they will defeat you"[3].

This is very significant as it clearly indicates that this small number

1 Al-Amaali, Al-Sadouq, p177. Manaqib Aal Abi Talib, Bin Shihr, v3, p238. Mothir Al-Ahzan, Bin Nima Al-Hilli, p27. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p218. Al-Lahouf, Bin Tawous, p19. Al-Khasaes Al-Fatimiya, Al-Kojouri, p433. Al-Majalis Al-Fakhira, 'Allama Sharafiddin, p119.

2 Al-Irshad, Sheikh Al-Mofid – May God be pleased with him, v2, p113. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, v4, p80. A'laam Al-Wara, v1, p470. Al-Dor Al-Nadheem, Bin Hatem Al-'Ameli, p558. Sharh Manahij Al-Karaama, Al-Milani, p558. Tarikh Al-Tabari, v6, p161. Morouj Al-Zahab, v2, p91. Al-Khotat Al-Maqriziya, v2, p288, Tarikh Al-Khamees, v3, p333.

3 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v3, p1045. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, Bin Al-Atheer, v4, p67. The phrase, "discerning people" was only mentioned by Saiyed Al-Maqram – May God bless his soul – in his Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), p248.

of men could bring utter defeat upon those thirty thousand soldiers besieging them. Their general commander obviously ordered them not to encounter the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUT) in a duel or else they would lose the battle.

Therefore, they began attacking the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) in groups, specifically cavalry squads, time after time and from every side, yet they were unable to break their ranks and more importantly their steadiness.

Al-Tabari[1] said: “The companions of Hussein (PBUH) fought them fiercely although they were thirty two horsemen; every time they assailed the cavalry lines of the people of Kufa, they exposed them, and when ‘Izra Bin Qais, the commander of the cavalry of the people of Kufa, saw they were exposed from all sides, he sent Abdurrahman Bin Hosn to ‘Omar Bin Sa’d as he said: You see what these small group did today to my cavalrymen! Send them men and archers.

‘Omar bin Saad called Al-Hosain Bin Tamim[2] and sent with him the armored horses[3] as well as five hundred archers. When they approached Hussein and his companions, they shot arrows at them, but it did not take long before their horses were wounded or slain and they all turned to infantrymen[4].

Thus, this scene reflected the beauty of steadiness and determination manifested in the companions of Imam Hussein

1 He is Mohammad Bin Jarir Bin Yazid Bin Khaal – also said Yazid Bin Katheer Bin Ghalib Al-Tabari, and he is known as Abu Ja’far; he was born in 224 AH and died in 310 AH over the age of 80. He has several compilations in jurisprudence, interpretation of the Noble Quran, Prophetic Tradition, readings of the Noble Quran, and others. See Wafiyat Al-A’yan, v4, p191. Mo’jam Al-Moallifin, Al-Kahala, v3, p895.

2 Al-Tabari said: Al-Hosain Bin Tamim was the head of police force in Kufa. He was sent by ‘Obaidullah Bin Ziad to fight Hussein (PBUH) and ‘Omar Bin Sa’d appointed him the commander of the armored forces of Yazid Bin Mo’awiya (Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p336).

3 “Al-Mojaffafa” was a form of armor put on horses to protect them from arrows and spears; armored horses are similar to armored divisions nowadays. The opposite of “Al-Mojaffafa” was called “Al-Mojarrada”, meaning plain or undressed. We found this meaning in a narration given by Bin Al-Atheer describing the forces headed to invade Takharistan (Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, Bin Al-Atheer, v5, p164).

4 Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, Bin Al-Atheer, v4, p68. Tarikh Al-Tabari, v3, p104. Ma’alim Al-Madrasatain, Al-‘Askari, v3, p105.

(PBUT) who fought fiercely in this epic battle, the fact that bewildered the commanders and soldiers.

Scene Six: the beauty of embracing affliction and the consequence

Several types of afflictions are embodied in ‘Ashura so much that it has become the example for ultimate sorrow and grief and that people find comfort and relief recalling the afflictions of ‘Ashura when themselves go through any afflictions or trials.

However, the question raised here is how the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUT) got the strength to endure all forms of afflictions on the day of ‘Ashura. The answer is straightforward; those great figures had perfect faith in the sense that their level of was different from that of common people in times of ordeals and afflictions.

Just by looking at the epic of Karbala, one can realize this fact through the true actions of those courageous men who were not intimidated by the large number of army surrounding them from all sides. On the contrary, they were imperturbable and unshakable like mountains.

This image is different from many know about the way warriors should behave in battlefields. There is no incident in history where few men go to a battle knowing the end result of and yet adorned and dressed as if preparing themselves for their wedding night.

Battle narrators mentioned that: “Borair Bin Khodhair Al-Hamadani – reciter of the Noble Quran – bantered with Abdurrahman Al-Ansari, so Abdurraahman said to him: Is this the time for such void?! Borair said: My people knew better that never liked void talk neither at old age nor at youth, but I can see a good omen in our ending, and what separate us and the Maidens (Hur-el-‘in) are those people. By God, I wish they attack us with their swords at this very moment.

Habib Bin Modhahir also was laughing when Yazid Bin Al-Hosain Al-Hamdani saw him and therefore said: Is this the right time for laugher? Habib said: What time is better for joy than this time? It only takes these people to attack us with their swords so we can embrace

the Maidens (Hur-el-‘in)”[1].

Once again, the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUT) created an aesthetic scene in which they turned their affliction into an opportunity to give one another the good news about the ending with which the Almighty Allah promised the righteous. These distinguished people longed for such a battle because it was only a matter of time and they would be carried in procession to their homes in Heaven where they could meet with their brides[2].

Scene Seven: the beauty of tender solicitude when protecting the women and dependants

One of the most beautiful qualities of a man is his solicitude and sense of honor. It could be the most important indication to manliness although manhood or masculinity does not necessarily imply manliness; many men have nothing to do with the qualities of a man except their sexual quality to such an extent that they cannot be even considered human beings.

Therefore, we see many Noble Traditions emphasizing on manliness in a believer and showing its beauty when it comes to sense of honor and tender solicitude towards family members.

Sheikh Al-Kolaini – May God bless his soul – reported that Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) said:

> *“The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: Ibrahim (PBUH) had solicitude and I have even more solicitude than him. May God mutilate the nose of the believers and Muslims who have no solicitude”[3].*

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) also said:

> *“The Almighty Allah is Solicitous and loves every solicitous person; hence, He prohibited all shameful deeds committed openly and covertly”[4].*

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) also reported that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said:

1 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p223-224.
2 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p224.
3 Al-Kafi, v5, p536. Wasael Al-Shi’a, v20, p153.
4 Ibid.

"Solicitude is part of faith"[1].

In view of that, we see the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUT) competing among themselves despites their calamities to defend the values and principles and the women and dependants. This is because their solicitude and their sense of honor revealed the beauty of their manliness and their unshakable faith.

One of these aesthetic scenes was on the night of 'Ashura when the great woman of the Prophetic Household, Zainab (PBUH), was horrified to see those armies besieging Imam Hussein (PBUH) from every side.

When her brother came back in the middle of the night after inspecting the surrounding hills and passages, she asked him: "Did you inquire about your companions' intentions? I'm afraid they will abandon you in the battle!"

In fact, Nafi' Bin Hilal Al-Jamali - May God be pleased with him – was accompanying Imam Hussein (PBUH) and when he entered the tent of Zainab (PBUH), Nafi' stayed outside waiting for him, therefore he heard their conversation.

Imam Hussein (PBUH) here said to her: "I put them to the test, and by God I saw nothing but courageous and ferocious men ready to meet death for me like a child requesting their mother's breast".

Nafie said: "When I heard him say that, I cried and went to Habib Bin Modhahir and told him what I heard from both Imam Hussein and his sister, Zainab (PBUT). Habib said: By God, if I were not waiting for his order, I would hasten to fight them this very night. I said: I left him over there with his sister, and I think other women have wakened up by now sharing her sadness. Would you gather your fellows and go say something to soothe their hearts?"

Habib rose and called out: "O you people of honor and lions of battles! He gathered his fellows and told them exactly what Nafi's heard. At this moment, they all said: By God Who bestowed this blessing on us, if we were not waiting for his order, we would attack them with our swords right away! Just tell us what you see fit and we will follow you. He said: Come with me to meet with the women in order to soothe their hearts".

1 Wasael Al-Shi'a, Al-'Ameli, v14, p108, No. 25289.

When Habib and his fellows arrived, he cried: “O pure women of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)! Here are your devoted young men; they are determined to thrust their swords into the throats and chests of those evildoers if tried to harm you or disunite you”.

When the women heard this, they came out crying and wailing and said: “O you kindhearted people! Protect the women of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and Amir Al-Mu’menin (PBUH)”[1].

At this point, all the people burst into tears and cried so hard that the earth was as if shaking.

Scene Eight: the beauty of confusion to following the right path

One of the aesthetic scenes, in regard to the day of ‘Ashura, manifested itself in confusion. To define confusion, we can say it is “when you get mixed up between two things, so that you are uncertain or worried about what you are going to do or say! Thus, if you are confused, you do not know exactly what to do”[2].

Moreover, the Arabic word “Haer” (confused) is also a reference to a man-made area of water. This is the reason why the shrine of Imam Hussein (PBUH) is sometimes called “Al-Haer Al-Husseini” as a reference to Al-Motawakkil Al-‘Abbasi who dug the ground around the tomb of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and let the water flow in order to conceal this holy spot, but it was God’s will to protect it from any harm[3].

Now, some readers might be astonished to find that there is beauty in confusion! However, if you look at the position of Al-Hor Bin Yazid Al-Riahi – May God be pleased with him – you will realize how beautiful confusion can be if it results in following the truth and the right path.

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1 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p226-227. Mawsou’at Shahadat Al-Ma’soumin (PBUT), Ma’had Baghir Al-‘Olooum, v1, p192. Mawsou’at Kalimat Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), p439. Al-Majalis Al-Fakhira, ‘Allama Sharafiddin, p231.

2 Al-Sihah, Al-Jawhari, v7, p640.

3 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v7, p365. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, v7, p55. Sharh Ihqaq Al-Haq, Al-Mar’ashi, v33, p735. Al-Amaali, Sheikh Al-Tousi, p329. Manaqib Aal Abi Talib, Bin Shihr, v3, p221.

Al-Hor Bin Yazid went through such experience; he was looking attentively at both encampments and he saw Heaven in the first encampment where Imam Hussein and his companions (PBUT) were standing, and how can the Master of the Youth of Heaven (PBUH) and Heaven be in two different encampments?!

He saw Fire in the second encampment where Omar Bin Sa'd and his soldiers were standing, and how can those prepared and determined to kill the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and Fire be in two different encampments?! The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

> *(Surely as for those who speak evil things of Allah and His Apostle, Allah has cursed them in this world and the Hereafter, and He has prepared for them a chastisement bringing disgrace)*[1].

Consequently, "when Al-Hor Bin Yazid Al-Riahi – May God be pleased with him – heard the call of Imam Hussein (PBUH) for help, he went to 'Omar Bin Sa'd and said: Do you plan to fight this man? He said: By God, yes! There will be a battle where the easiest to see is scattering heads and hands! Al-Hor said: What do you say about his suggestions? Bin Sa'd replied: If it were my choice, I would accept, but your leader refused to listen to him.

Al-Hor Bin Yazid retreated and stood back with the other people, and then he asked Qorra Bin Qais, who was standing beside him: Have you given your horse any water today? He said: No. Al-Hor said: Do you want to do that now? Qorra Bin Qais thought he wanted to withdraw so he left Al-Hor because he hated to see him that.

When Al-Hor was approaching the camp of Imam Hussein (PBUH), Al-Mohajir Bin Aws asked him: Do you want to attack? He kept silence and began trembling. When Al-Mohajir saw this, he began raising doubts, so he asked: If I were asked who the most courageous man in Kufa was, I would name you, but what is it that I see you doing now?

Al-Hor said: I am choosing between Heaven and Hell, and by God, I prefer nothing over Heaven even if they burn me[2].

1 33.57

2 Al- Lahouf Fi Qatla Al-Tofouf, Bin Tawous, p19.

For a period of time, Al-Hor Bin Yazid Al-Riahi was confused between the right and wrong, but he eventually saw the right path and the beauty of following the truth. That is why he said: “By God, I prefer nothing over Heaven even if they burn me”.

Scene Nine: the beauty of turning to God in repentance

This beauty manifesting itself in Al-Hor Bin Yazid Al-Riahi (PBUH) going through confusion to certainty and choosing the truth was, at the same time, followed by another aesthetic scene, namely the beauty of repentance. In this regard, battle narrators described a very beautiful scene in which Al-Hor *“turned to God in repentance”*[1].

Hence, we see Al-Hor riding his horse quickly towards Imam Hussein (PBUH) with his spear lowered, his shield turned upside down and his head bowed out of respect for the household of the Prophet (PBUH) and out of shame for what he said about them and did to them leaving them with no water and food in the desert. Therefore, when Al-Hor arrived before Imam Hussein (PBUH), he cried:

“O God! I turn to You in repentance, so forgive me. I terrified the hearts of Your holy men and the household of Your Prophet. O Abu Abdullah! I am repentant; will it be accepted?”

Imam Hussein (PBUH) said:

“Yes, God forgive you”.

Al-Hor was very delighted to hear that as he was now certain of eternal life and eternal bliss[2].

What a beautiful scene it is when one turns to God in repentance.

Scene Ten: the beauty of marital parity

The epic of Al-Taff in the desert of Kabala is about all members of a family; we see fathers, mothers and children, male and female, old and young, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins and other relatives within one clan.

If we thoroughly study the relations between these members and

1 Majma’ Al-Bahrain, v2, p15. The Arabic word, “Tawba” is a strong feeling of regret and remorse when doing wrong or committing a sin.

2 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p246.

the way in which they behave towards each other, we will come up with various lessons for every Muslim family so that we can build a healthy society, especially these days as our families are being exposed to certain cultures that are in opposition to our values and principles.

Despite the affluence and the privileges of modern life, we still see many clashes and quarrels among members of one family, but if they had to go through difficult times where they can hardly manage their lives?! Will they be united or parted?

Therefore, if parents and guardians look at the beautiful scenes of Karbala and the beautiful relations among the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) as well as their family members, they can learn a lot of lessons about the mechanism of dealing with their children, their spouses, their siblings and other siblings.

Now, one of the important lessons that we will focus on, in this section, will be “parity between spouses”, as the epic of Karbala provided a very beautiful image of parity between a man and his wife in different aspects of life like ideologies, intellects, beliefs and even Jihad (fighting Holy Battles), especially when it come to supporting the grandson of the Messenger of Allah and his household (PBUT).

In this scene, we see Abdullah Bin ‘Omair Al-Kalbi – from Bani ‘Aleem tribe – who was known as Abu Wahab and his wife Om Wahab Bint Abdullah Bin Al-Nimir Bin Qasit. Abu Wahab was a tall and strong man with broad shoulders as he was known among his people for his honesty and bravery.

In fact, the aesthetic scene of parity between them manifested itself in two occasions:

First occasion: was when Abu Wahab sought advice from his wife about joining the camp of Imam Hussein (PBUH), as she said to him: “You are in the right. May God guide you to the right path! Do it and take me with you”; they both left at night and they lastly joined Imam Hussein (PBUH).

Second occasion: was when Yassar, servant of Ziad Bin Abih, and Salim, servant of ‘Obaidullah Bin Ziad – May God’s curse be upon them – stepped out to fight a duel. At this moment, Habib Bin Modhahir and Borair Bin Khodhair leaped forward, but Imam Hussein (PBUH) did not give them permission.

When Abdullah Bin ‘Omair Al-Kalbi, or Abu Wahab, stood up, Imam Hussein (PBUH) gave him his blessing and said:

“I consider him a good match for this fight”.

They said: Who are you? We do not know you. Let Zohair or Habib or Borair come forward. Yassar was closer to him, so Abu Wahab said to him: O son of adulteress! You refuse to fight me! Then, he charged toward him with his sword.

While he was busy with Yassar, Salim attacked him and struck him with the sword; Abdullah shielded himself with his left hand and lost his fingers, but Abdullah attacked him back and killed him, and then he went back to Imam Hussein (PBUH) roaring after finishing the two of them.

When his wife saw him, she picked a pole and approached him saying: I give my life for you! Fight for these noble people, the offspring of Mohammad (PBUH). He asked her to go back to the tent but she refused to obey and began pulling his robe say: I will not let you go unless I die out there with you.

Here, Imam Hussein (PBUH) called her: “You did well enough for the household of your Prophet; go back now to the tent as women are not required to fight”. Thus, she returned[1].

However, this loyal wife did not leave her husband as she was determined to stay with him dead or alive, in order to do something in defense of Imam Hussein (PBUH) before meeting the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

In the meanwhile, the courageous men of Al-Taf were encountering the oppressors with all power and determination despite their small number; some of them were martyred and some others were waiting for their turn.

At this time, Shimr along with his fellows attacked the left wing of Imam Hussein (PBUH) but his companions drove them back. Abdullah Bin ‘Omair Al-Kalbi was participating in this faight as he killed nineteen horsemen and twelve others on foot, and finally Hani Bin Shibth Al-Hadhrami attacked him and cut off his right hand, then Bakr Bin Hai came along and cut his leg off and took him captive, yet he was killed later.

1 Mothir Al-Ahzan, Bin Nima Al-Hilli, p46. Al-Bihar, v45, p17.

His wife, Om Wahab, saw this and sat next to his head and wiped the blood away while saying: “Have pleasure in Heaven! I ask God to make me your companion in Heaven”.

Shimr here said to his servant, Rostam: Smite her head with that pole. He smashed her head and she died instantly. Om Wahab was the first woman killed among the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH)[1].

After that, he cut off his head and threw him towards Ima Hussein (PBUH); his mother picked it and wiped the blood away, and then she took a pole of a tent in her hand and charged into the battle, but Imam Hussein (PBUH) did not allow her and said: “May God bless your soul! Return back as you are not required for Jihad”. She went back saying: “O God! Do not reject my request”. Imam Hussein (PBUH) said: *“God shall not reject your request”*[2].

This dignified family presented itself as a unique example through reflecting the beauty of parity between men and women in different aspects such as faith, sacrifice and dedication to their master and Imam, womanly tenderness, manly solicitude, forbearance in times of calamities, eagerness for martyrdom and other values and principles of life.

Scene Eleven: the beauty of love when the beloved one is your greatest concern

All the feelings and emotions needed by human beings can be found in ‘Ashura; we will not be exaggerating if we say that ‘Ashura is the source from which humanity nourishes its true passion, sentiment and affection.

For that reason, we see the masses of deprived and oppressed people use images from this epic day to unburden themselves of emotional problems, as they replace their despair with hope, confusion with determination, affliction with consolation, harshness with tenderness and more importantly hate with love in order to strengthen human ties.

1 Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p17. Al-‘Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p261.

2 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p252, transcribed from Tadhallom Al-Zahra (PBUH), p113.

Accordingly, we find love in Karbala in its most beautiful forms so much that the beloved person becomes your only concern. In a situation where everyone should naturally be worried about themselves and about their own survival, some people tend to ask about their beloved person even at their last moments.

Such a unique scene can only be found in the desert of Karbala where love has a different and special story! We see the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) bleeding due to their serious wounds, yet their main concern is making sure about their beloved Imam!

On the day of ‘Ashura, we have a scene where ‘Amr Bin Al-Hajjaj charged from the side of Euphrates and fought the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) for a time; Moslim Bin ‘Awsaja was in this battle as Moslim Bin Abdullah Al-Dhobabi and Abdullah Bin Khashkara Al-Bajali attacked him along with many other enemies. When the dust cleared away, we see Moslim Bin ‘Awsaja thrown to the ground taking his last breath of life; Imam Hussein (PBUH) came to him together with Habib Bin Modhahir, as Imam Hussein (PBUH) said to him:

> *“May God bless your soul, O Moslim! (Of them is he who accomplished his vow, and of them is he who yet waits, and they have not changed in the least)[1]”.*

Habib came close to him and said: It is painful for me to see your demise. O Moslim! You will be in Heaven.

Moslim said weakly: God rewards you well.

Habib said: If I did not know I will follow you, I would love you to entrust me with what you care about?

Moslim said: I do want to entrust you with this – pointing to Imam Hussein (PBUH) – and die in the defense of him[2].

Habib said: By the Lord of Ka’ba, I will.

At this moment, Moslim Bin ‘Awsaja passed away before them creating an immortal scene reflecting the beauty of love, as his greatest concern was his beloved person to the moment of death.

1 33.23

2 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p331. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, Bin Al-Atheer, v4, p68. Mawsou’at Kalimat Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), p232. Qamous Al-Rijal, Tastari, v10, p69. Al-Bidaya Wa Al-Nihaya, Bin Katheer, v8, p197. A’yan Al-Shi’a, v4, p555.

Scene Twelve: the beauty of equestrian skills

It is normal to see beautiful scenes related to horsemanship in the epic of ‘Ashura where horsemen had to encounter in battle, attack and retreat, collide and withstand using their skills in both fighting and horse riding.

In the battle of Al-Taf, there were various types of troops like archers, infantrymen as well as cavalrymen or horsemen who mostly carry the weight of the fighting.

Of course, one cannot be part of cavalry unless they gain mastery in fighting on horse and on foot, as every horseman should expect to wind up fighting on foot when their horses are killed due to shooting arrows or throwing spears.

When a horse is killed during a battle, a warrior falls over and often gets confused, and so his opponent can easily kill him. For that reason, the ability to move fast from the injured horse is one of the most important equestrian skills on the part of the warriors and it shows their agility and quickness in encountering their opponents.

There are several aesthetic scenes in ‘Ashura in regard to horsemanship, however the scene that showed the beauty of agility and nimbleness manifested itself in one of well-known horsemen of the time, namely Al-Hor Bin Yazid Al-Riahi – May God be pleased with him.

Historians and battle narrators mentioned that Al-Hor Bin Yazid Al-Riahi charged into battle along with Zohair Bin Al-Qain to shield his back. They fought for a time as they took turn to charge into battle while the other was watching his fellow’s back. The horse of Al-Hor was wounded in the ears and eyebrows and was bleeding abundantly, yet Al-Hor kept fighting ferociously while reciting poetry from ‘Antara:

I keep smiting them in the throat and heart

So hard that I see them bleeding

At this point, Al-Hosain said to Yazid bin Sofyan: This is Al-Hor whom you wished to kill! Yes, he is, said Yazid and attacked him, but soon he was killed by Al-Hor.

Afterward, Aiyoub Bin Mashrah Al-Khaiwani shot an arrow at his horse, so the injured and terrified horse reared, but Al-Hor leaped

away from the horse like a lion and landed with his sword held high, ready to smite the enemy. He fought valiantly and killed over forty men, but they surrounded him and badly injured him.

The companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and put him in front of the large tent they were protecting next to other martyrs; Imam Hussein (PBUH) here said:

> *“Killers like the killers of the Prophets and the households of the Prophets”.*

Then he turned to Al-Hor who was taking his last breath of life and said to him while wiping the blood off his him:

> *“You are Al-Hor (free man) like your mother named you; you are a free man in this world and the next world”.*

A man from the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) – also reported he was Ali Bin Al-Hussein (PBUT) – began to lament the death of Al-Hor Bin Yazid Al-Riahi through reciting poems[1].

The martyrdom of Al-Hor (PBUH) put an end to another aesthetic scene of ‘Ashura, although his memory still lives among all free men of the world. His equestrian skills also have inspired horsemen generation after generation; when his horse reared – meaning it moved its front legs high in the air, Al-Hor leaped away quickly like a lion and landed with his sword held high. This scene clearly showed the beauty of his agility, quickness, manliness and strength, not to mention that a huge number of poems have been written about this specific aesthetic scene[2].

Scene Thirteen: the beauty of loyalty and dedication to the last breath

Linguists suggested that: Fanaa (extinction or passing away) is the opposite of Baqaa (existence or survival); the verb is Yafna (to pass away or to become extinct)[3]. Therefore, Tafaani (entire dedication) means to make every effort and to sacrifice oneself for someone.

In view of that, we have another aesthetic scene on the day of ‘Ashura, which is making extreme effort for love and for loyalty to

1 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p255-256.
2 Nafh Al-Taiyib Fi Ghosn Al-Andolos Al-Taiyib, Al-Maqri Al-Talmasaani, v2, p475.
3 Al-‘Ain, Al-Farahidi, v8, p376.

death; this beauty of love and entire dedication embodied in the martyrdom of Sa'eed Bin Abdullah Al-Hanafi and 'Amr Bin Qordha Al-Ansari.

Regarding Sa'eed Bin Abdullah Al-Hanafi, he advanced along with Zohair Bin Al-Qain in front of Imam Hussein (PBUH), who was saying fear prayer[1] with what was left of his companions, and made himself a target for their arrows[2].

Sa'eed kept moving up and down whenever Imam Hussein (PBUH) prostrated himself or bowed down in worship, so much that he fell to the ground due to his serious injuries, and then he said: O Lord! Curse them the curse of 'Aad and Thamoud, and give my regards to Your Prophet and inform him about my wounds, as I wanted Your reward for supporting the offspring of Your Prophet.

He then turned to Imam Hussein (PBUH) and said: Have I fulfilled my duty, O son of the Messenger of Allah? Imam Hussein (PBUH) said: *"Yes, you are ahead of me in Heaven"*.

In this moment, Sa'eed Bin Abdullah Al-Hanafi passed away with thirteen arrows in his body in addition to several other wounds due to swords and spears stabs[3].

As for 'Amr Bin Qordha Al-Ansari, he asked permission from Imam Hussein (PBUH) and charged into battle courageously in service of the Master of Heaven as he killed a large number of the mercenaries of Bin Ziad; he also shielded Imam Hussein (PBUH) with his own body receiving enemy's arrows and swords so much that he fell to the ground due to his numerous deep wounds.

At this moment, he turned to Imam Hussein (PBUH) and said: Have I fulfilled my duty, O son of the Messenger of Allah? Imam Hussein (PBUH) replied: *"Yes, you are ahead of me in Heaven, so give the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) my best regards and let him know I am coming"*[4].

This aesthetics scene on the day of 'Ashura has been unique throughout history and it will remain unique to the Day of Judgment; there were certain aesthetic features formed in certain aesthetic

1 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p256.
2 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p336. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, v4, p71.
3 Al-Bihar, v45, p21. A'yan Al-Shi'a, v7, p241.
4 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p256 & p258.

circumstances that resulted in such a beautiful and unique scene, and this cannot come gather elsewhere because no one could have that much love, loyalty and dedication that they would be willing to take pain, suffering, stabbing and ultimately to give their life in support of their Imam and leader in order to please Allah and His Messenger (PBUH).

This is the reason why the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) said:

“I know no companions better and more loyal than my companion”.

Scene Fourteen: the beauty of faith in the unseen manifests itself in hastening to meet death

“Faith is strong religious belief, and part of which is related to the unseen (Ghaib) meaning hidden secrets or supernatural phenomena; it can include the spirit, the state of grave, the Almighty Allah, and so on”[1].

Now, believing in the unseen reflects its beauty when one hastens towards martyrdom merely for the sake of Allah, and this is, in fact, the highest level of faith in the unseen as the Almighty Allah shall reward them well for that.

The crystal clear evidence is the following Holy Verse from the Noble Quran in which we notice that believing in the unseen is the first among many qualities of pious people:

> *(Alif Lam Mim۞This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who guard [against evil]۞Those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them۞And who believe in that which has been revealed to you and that which was revealed before you and they are sure of the Hereafter)*[2].

Therefore, because they also believe in the Hereafter, they rush towards martyrdom in order to achieve what their Maker promised them with.

This aesthetic scene manifests itself perfectly in day of ‘Ashura as Imam Hussein (PBUH) said fear prayer with his companions and

1 Taqrib Al-Azhan Ila Al-Quran, Saiyed AL-Shirazi – God bless his soul, v1, p103.
2 2.1-4

afterward he turned to them and said:

> *"O gracious men! Heaven has opened its doors, its rivers have joined and its fruits have grown ripe. Here is the Messenger of Allah and the martyrs who died for the sake of Allah expecting your arrival; they pass this good news to one another, so protect His religion and the religion of His Prophet, defend the women of the Prophet".*

They said: "We sacrifice our souls and our blood for you; by God, no one will harm you and your women as far as our hearts continue beating in our chests"[1].

How beautiful this scene is when these pious men reflected their faith in the unseen through fulfilling their duty and happily accepting death on the day of 'Ashura.

Scene Fifteen: the beauty of men challenging for a duel

This is another scene related to inimitable manliness that reflects the beauty of challenging in a duel, as a warrior proclaims among a crowd of men challenging for a duel fight, yet none of them dare to step forward; despite the fact that the enemy soldiers are in thousands and all of them are prepared to fight, they stand silent as if they were turned into hard rocks!

It is a breathtaking and mind-blowing scene in which the matchless companions of Imam Hussein (PBUT) compete with one another to challenge the countless enemy soldiers of Yazid Bin Mo'awiya.

One of those men was 'Abis Bin Abi Shabib Al-Shakiri who came to Imam Hussein (PBUH) asking for permission, so he said: "O Abu Abdullah! By God, there is no one on the face of the earth, near or far, dearer to me than you. If I could push this injustice away from with something dearer than my life, I would surely do that. Peace be upon you! I bear witness that I follow your guidance and your father's guidance".

Then he walked toward the enemy holding his sword high. Abu Makhnaf reported that Rabee' Bin Namim, who personally witnessed

1 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p257, transcribed from Asraar Al-Shahada, p175.

the day of ‘Ashura, said: When I saw him coming, I recognized him from the scar on his forehead. I have seen him before in the Holy Battles fighting bravely, thus I said: O people! Here is the lion of the lions; this is Bin Abi Shabib. Do not go to his fight.

‘Abis looked around and said: “Anyone to fight man to man?!” No one dared to answer him as if they all lost their manliness. Here, ‘Omar Bin Sa’d said: Stone him so he yields. A large crowd began throwing stones at him from every side.

When ‘Abis saw that, he dropped his armor and his shield and charged at them driving away more than two hundred soldiers, but they surrounded him and killed him.

Afterwards, several soldiers began quarreling over who killed ‘Abis Bin Abi Shabib – May God be pleased with him – and when they went to ‘Omar Bin Sa’d, he said: Do not quarrel! He could not be killed by one single man. Therefore, he managed to separate between them[1].

Scene Sixteen: the beauty of lineage when released from self-slavery

Linguists have mentioned that “Hasab” (lineage) is that firmly established honor inherited from forefathers[2], and what is considered to be their source of pride[3].

At first, we need to know that in the desert of Karbala and on the day of ‘Ashura, there were two types of people:

The first type were Bedouins, their supporters or servants (“Mawla” meaning people with no recognized lineage) and some Arab tribes such as Bani Tamim, Mazhaj, Kinda, Hawazin and Bani Asad; these tribes and others stood with ‘Omar Bin Sa’d to fight against Imam Hussein (PBUH), as they cut off the heads after the battle and carried them to ‘Obaidullah Bin Ziad in order to seek his favor.

1 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p338. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, v4, p73. Al-Bidaya Wa Al-Nihaya, v8, p200. Mostadrakat A’yan Al-Shi’a, v1, p64. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf, p153. Al-Kona Wa Al-Alqab, Sheikh ‘Abbas Al-Qommi – God bless his soul, v1, p196.

2 Al-‘Ain, Al-Farahidi, v3, p148.

3 Majma’ Al-Bahrain, v2, p41.

As a matter of fact, Hawazin had twenty two of the heads. Tamim had seventeen of them led by Al-Hosain Bin Namir. Kinda carried thirteen heads represented by Qais Bin Al-Ash'ath. Bani Asad came with six heads led by Hilal Bin Al-A'war. Al-Azd came with five of them headed by 'Ohaima Bin Zohair, and finally Thaqif carried twelve of the heads represented by Al-Waleed Bin 'Amr[1].

The second type included Bani Hashim, some men from the Arab tribes that inhabited the land of Hijaz and that left Medina along with Imam Hussein (PBUH), some men from the tribes of Kufa as well as their supporters such as "Jon", servant of Abu Zar Al-Ghafari, and Wadhih Al-Torki – May God be pleased with them all.

The Arabs used to pride themselves on their lineage and ancestry, especially in battles, as warriors would proudly introduce themselves and their lineage through reciting some lines of poetry before they begin a duel in order to terrify their opponents and also choose someone of equal lineage and ancestry to theirs.

Many warriors or combatants would refrain from a duel if they did not know their opponent or if the opponent did not introduce himself.

This was the case when Abdullah Bin 'Omair Al-Kalbi stepped out to fight Yassar, servant of Ziad Bin Abu Sofyan, and Salim, servant of 'Obaidullah Bin Ziad. They asked: Who are you? When he introduced himself, they said: We do not know you. Let Zohair Bin Al-Qain, Habib Bin Modhahir or Borair Bin Khodhair come forward. Yassar was closer to him, therefore Abdullah Bin 'Omair said to him: O son of adulteress! You refuse to fight me. Every person here is better than you[2].

Actually, this scene reveals the following issues:

1. The psychological state of many supporters or servants who joined the people in power in order to compensate for the lack of lineage or ancestry; they thought taking side with the oppressors would fill theirs social and psychological void. For that reason, they

1 Al-Akhbar Al-Tiwal, Al-Dainouri, p259. Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p358. Al-Kamil, Bin Al-Atheer, v4, p91. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf, p233. Al-Lahouf, Bin Tawous, p85. Al-Fosoul Al-Mohimma, Bin Al-Sabbagh, v2, p849. Sharh Ihqaq Al-Haq, Al-Mar'ashi, v23, p661. Al-Bihar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p62.

2 Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p327. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, v4, p65. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf, p124.

refused the duel although he introduced his lineage and ancestry and they insisted on fighting warriors with famous lineage and social prestige like Zohair Bin Al-Qain, Habib Bin Modhahir and the reciter of Kufa, Borair Bin Khodhair.

2. More importantly, lineage pride took a different shape in the encampment of Imam Hussein (PBUH); it had a beautiful content since it was based on faith in God and love for the household of Mohammad (PBUT) in addition to liberation from self-slavery and earthly desires.

This highly significant aesthetic scene manifested itself in two separate occasions:

The first occasion

was when Jon (PBUH), who was a black servant[1], stepped forward and asked for permission, so Imam Hussein (PBUH) said to him:

> *“You have my permission, but if you followed us seeking for wellbeing, then do not undergo our agonizing path”.*

Jon said: O son of the Messenger of Allah! I would be enjoying your prosperity and forsaking you in adversity. By God, I have foul-smelling, vile lineage and black skin, so breathe Heaven upon me to make my smell pleasant, to ennoble my lineage and to whiten my face. I swear to God I will not desert until this black blood of mine mingle with your blood.

After that, Jon charged into the battle while enthusiastically reciting these lines of poetry:

How will the infidels see this black fighting?

As he smites them for the offspring of Mohammad,

Protecting them with tongue and hand;

I seek after him for Heaven on the Day of Gathering.

He fought heroically to the moment he was killed, then Imam Hussein (PBUH) stood next to him and said:

> *“Oh Lord! Whiten his face, make his scent pleasant, gather him with the righteous and acquaint him with Mohammad and the*

1 Mawsou’at Kalimat Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), p451.

household of Mohammad"[1].

It was narrated from Imam Al-Baqir (PBUH) that Ali Bin Al-Hussein (PBUT) said:

"People in the battle were burying the dead and they found Jon ten days later smelling of musk"[2].

This way, the black Jon (PBUH) earned higher and more honorable lineage in this world and the next world than 'Omar Bin Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqas Al-Qurashi who was shamefaced in this world and the next world.

Accordingly, the school of Mohammedan kinsfolk (PBUT) steadily devoted themselves to establish and internalize this form of beauty in people's attitudes, whether it is in Karbala and on the day of 'Ashura or in different places and different times.

Sheikh Al-Kolaini – May Allah be pleased with him – reported that 'Oqba Bin Bashir Al-Asadi said to Abu Jafar (PBUH): I am 'Oqba Bin Bashir Al-Asadi and we come from a huge lineage. Abu Jafar (PBUH) said:

"Do not boast about your lineage. Allah raises with belief he who people call lowly if he is a believer and degrades with disbelief he who people call noble if he is a disbeliever. Thus, no one has superiority over another but with piety"[3].

The second occasion

in which the beauty of lineage manifested itself in the camp of Imam Hussein (PBUH) was when 'Amr Bin Jonada advanced for the battle; he was eleven years old[4], a young man whose father was killed in the battle. His mother was with him, so she said to him: Go out, my son, and fight in the presence of the son of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). Here Imam Hussein (PBUH) said:

"The father of his young man was killed in the battle, and

1 Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p23. Al-'Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p266. Lawa'ej Al-Ashjan, Saiyed Mohsin Al-Ameen, p149. Ma'alim Al-Madrasatain, Al-'Askaari, v3, p120. Mostadrakat 'Ilm Al-Rijal, Al-Shahroudi, p245. A'yan Al-Shi'a, v1, p605.

2 Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p23.

3 Al-Kafi, v2, p328.

4 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p264.

perhaps his mother dislikes his fighting”.

The young man said: My mother ordered me to do so. Therefore, Imam Hussein (PBUH) gave him permission.

The Arabs always introduced themselves and their lineage proudly in battles, but this young man came to the realization that the beauty of lineage is in affiliation with Imam Hussein (PBUH), so he advanced toward them while reciting these lines of poetry:

My leader is Hussein and what a true leader he is;

He is the delight of the heart of glad-tidings bearer and the clear warner.

Ali and Fatima are his parents,

So, do you know anyone of his match?

He charged at them and fought bravely, and when he was killed, they cut off his head and throw it toward the encampment of Imam Hussein (PBUH); his mother carried his head and said: Well done my son and the delight of my eye! Then she threw his head at a man and had him killed[1].

This aesthetic scene establishes a new approach for peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups within the Muslim community based on dissolving social classes in the sense that people should not boast about the glories of their ancestors, and that the only thing to boast of should be what they gain from piety and goodness, no matter if they are Arabs or not or if they are white or black; their source of pride has to be associated with supporting and following the true people, as we read in the Noble Quran:

(O you who believe! be careful of (your duty to) Allah and be with the true ones)[2].

Scene Seventeen: the beauty of humanity in relieving people in grief

One of the most important qualities that make us human is the

1 Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p28. Manaqib Aal Abi Talib, Bin Shihr Ashob, v3, p253. Al-‘Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p271. A’yan Al-Shi’a, v1, p607.

2 9.119

sense of relief, meaning to help and to support in times of adversity[1].

Due to its great significance in forming man's high moral standards, the Noble Quran considers relief one of the mental faculties that distinguish the people of infallibility, namely the Prophets, the Messengers and the Imams – peace be upon them.

Therefore, we have the story of Prophet Moses (PBUH) who was called for help by one of his followers; the Almighty Allah says in Noble Quran:

> *(And he went into the city at a time of unvigilance on the part of its people, so he found therein two men fighting, one being of his party and the other of his foes, and he who was of his party cried out to him for help against him who was of his enemies, so Musa struck him with his fist and killed him. He said: This is on account of the Shaitan's doing; surely he is an enemy, openly leading astray)*[2].

Moreover, we have a number of Noble Traditions emphasizing on the role of this human moral quality in defending people in need and its affect on strengthening various social bonds within the Muslim community.

Here, we shall go through some of them:

1. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said:

   "Whosoever relieve a person in need, Allah records for them seventy three rewards, one of which shall amend the next world and this world of theirs, and the rest in their ranks"[3].

2. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) also said:

   "Of the requirements for forgiveness are giving pleasure to your Muslim brothers, satiating their hunger and relieving their sorrow"[4].

3. Amir Al-Mu'menin, Imam Ali (PBUH), said:

   "Of things that grant remission to grave sins are helping people in need and relieving their sorrow"[5].

1 Mo'jam Maqaees Al-Logha, v4, p401.
2 28.15
3 Al-Risala Al-Sa'diya, 'Allama Al-Hilli, p164.
4 Ibid.
5 Sharh Nahj Al-Balagha,Mohammad Abde, v4, p7.

4. Imam Zain Al-‘Abedeen (PBUH) said:

“Of sins that cause affliction to come down are to forsake helping people in need, to forsake assisting the oppressed and a disregarding the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice”[1].

5. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was asked: What is the best deed? He said:

“It is giving please to your Muslim brother or paying a debt for him or feeding him bread”[2].

Indeed, there is no greater pleasure for a Muslim than finding someone to relieve him from his suffering.

6. Amir Al-Mu’menin, Imam Ali (PBUH), said:

“The best kind act is reliving a person in grief”[3].

Having said that, the epic of ‘Ashura perfectly presented us with several scenes through which the beauty of humanity manifested itself in relieving people in grief. We see the companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH) rushed to help and support him as well as the Household of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

We also see Imam Hussein (PBUH) himself rushing to relive his companions and his family members when they called him for help while taking their last breaths such as Moslim Bin ‘Awsaja, Wadhih Al-Torki, his servant Aslam, his brother Al-‘Abbas Bin Abu Talib and his nephew Al-Qasim Bin Al-Hasan – peace be upon them[4].

At the same time that we see the beauty of humanity, these scenes reflect the ugliness of humankind in the other camp, to such an extent that they could hardly be called human due to absence of

1 Ma’ani, Al-Akhbar, Sheikh Al-Sadouq – May God bless his soul, p371.

2 Al-Risala Al-Sa’diya, ‘Allama Al-Hilli, p164.

3 Wasael Al-Shi’a, v12, p416.

4 When Imam Hussein (PBUH) came to Al-Qasim, he checked his leg and then put his head in his lap and said: “By God, it is difficult for your uncle that you call him, but he cannot answer you, or he answers but cannot be of use to you. After that, Imam Hussein (PBUH) carried Al-Qasim while his legs shuffling on the ground, then put him next to Ali Al-Akbar and others from his family that were killed in the battle (Motheer Al-Ahzan, Bin Nima Al-Hilli, p52. Iqbal Al-A’mal, Saiyed Bin Tawous, v3, p75. Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p67. Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p341).

human qualities. After the death of his companions and his family members, Imam Hussein (PBUH) called for help and said his famous words: “Is there anyone to support me?”, but he found no answer, because they turned into some other species although they still looked like humans from outside.

As far as our focus is on those beautiful scenes, we can mention the incident when Wadhih Al-Torki, servant and supporter of Al-Harth Al-Mazhaji, was passing away on the desert of Karbala and he called Imam Hussein (PBUH) for relief; Abu Abdullah (PBUH) answered him and carried him in his arms, therefore Wadhih said:

“Who am I that the son of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) would put his cheek on mine?”, and then his pure soul departed[1].

This breathtaking and glorious scene and many others formed the very essence for the epic of ‘Ashura; it was those noble human qualities that forced the companions of Imam Hussein to answer his call and support him and his household, and thereby they created this everlasting story of self-sacrifice and self-denial unlike many others with no human qualities.

Scene Eighteen: the beauty of modesty to the point of self-effacement

The school of ‘Ashura constantly urges us to celebrate moral virtues through providing us with its most beautiful scenes. One of these virtues was modesty or humility that manifested itself in Imam Hussein (PBUH) in its highest forms.

According to ethicists, modesty is “when you do not consider yourself of higher status than other people”[2].

Moreover, we have a number of Noble Traditions emphasizing on the importance of modesty and humility and its affect on maintaining affection and affinity among the members of one society.

What follows is only a sample of these Noble Traditions:

1. Imam Mousa Bin Ja’far (PBUH) said:

1 Absaar Al-‘Ain, Al-Samawi – May God bless his soul, p96, Published by Islamic Studies Center, Qom. A’yan Al-Shi’a, v3, p303. Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p259.

2 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Akhlaq, Saiyed Kamal Al-Haidari, p66.

“Everything has a m mount and the mount of mind is modesty”[1].

2. It was reported that Mohammad Bin Moslim said: I heard Abu Ja’far (PBUH) mentioned that archangel Gabriel came to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and said:

“Allah grants you the choice between being a serving humble messenger or an angel messenger. He looked at Gabriel and said: A serving humble messenger. The angel said: Although you would have nothing less than what your God has. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: He has the keys for the treasures of the earth”[2].

3. Imam Al-Ridha (PBUH) said:

“There are levels for modesty; of which is when one knows his status and appreciate it with a fine heart so that he would not like to treat anyone but the way they treat him. When he sees a misdeed, he repels it a good deed. He restrains his anger, forgive people, and Allah loves the doers of good”[3].

4. Al-Hasan Bin Al-Jahm said:

“I asked Imam Al-Ridha (PBUH): I give my life for you! What is the limit for trust (Tawakkol)? He replied:

Do not be afraid of anyone but Allah.

I give my life for you! What is the limit for modesty (Tawadho’)? He replied:

It is to give people from yourself the same that you would like them to give you.

I give my life for you! I would like to know what I am to you. He said:

See what I am to you”[4].

Now, let us go back to the school of ‘Ashura to see the aesthetic scenes that reflected these moral virtues. We have already learned that Imam Hussein (PBUH) rushed to his son Ali Al-Akbar, his brother Al-‘Abbas and other martyrs from Bani Hashim. At the same time, we see Imam Hussein (PBUH) rushing to Wadhih Al-Torki,

1 Al-Kafi, Sheikh Al-Kolaini – May God bless his soul, v1, p422.
2 Al-Wasael, v15, p273, No. 20496.
3 Al-Wasael, v15, p274, No. 20498.
4 Al-Wasael, v15, p274, No. 20500.

servant of Al-Harth Al-Mazhaji, and to his own servant, Aslam, as he embraced them when they were taking the last breath.

This reflects complete self-effacement and modesty on the part of a leader and a reformer. He does not make a distinction between his own family and relatives and his supporters and servants so much that he takes his servant into his arms and put his cheek on his as if he is his own son.

In fact, this beautiful scene is unique and of great significance to the epic of ‘Ashura in the sense that we see a combination of moral virtues like equality between the leader and followers from different ranks, modesty towards others and relieving those in need all in the person of Imam Hussein (PBUH) at one and the same time.

Scene Nineteen: the beauty of kinship when defending kinsfolk against dishonor

One of the social scenes that appeared in the day of ‘Ashura is related to the beauty of kinship and protecting relatives against dishonor (Hawaan)[1].

Kin (Qorba) or kinship (Qaraaba): are people with blood relationship[2], as your closest relatives are your cousins and their children.

The school of ‘Ashura presented us a unique image in regard to cohesion and solidity among cousins as they all answered the call of their cousin and defended his honor and dignity. This is because they considered his honor as their own honor and his dishonor as their own dishonor.

Nowadays, we are in great need of this social and educational example as kinship has not only become mere names and titles people carry around like cousins, uncles and nephews, but also reasons for rivalry and bickering.

The reason is that many families began to distance themselves from the teachings of Islam through following hybrid cultures that invaded Muslim communities that failed to fully adhere to Arab and

1 The Arabic word, Hawaan (disgrace or dishonor) is the opposite of ‘Iz (reputation and honor).

2 Lisan Al-‘Arab, v1, p665, stem word “Qaraba”.

Islamic values. We do need cultural exchange, but first we have to protect our families from strange and conflicting cultures through fortifying them with teachings of Islam as well as Arab noble traditions.

Therefore, we are in need of correctly studying the life of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and the Noble Quran and applying the learned lessons within our families and ultimately our communities.

Of course, the school of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and ‘Ashura are also important sources for every member of a Muslim family due to the beautiful images they offer us in regard to kinship and social life on all levels.

Accordingly, we see the beautiful kinship among cousins in its highest forms, as they all stood together to defended their cousin against dishonor so much so that when Imam Hussein (PBUH) saw this tender solicitude on the part of Bani Hashim, he proclaimed:

> *“Have patience towards death, O my cousins! By God, you shall see no dishonor after this day”*[1].

Some of the men from Bani Hashim were ‘Awn Bin Abdullah Bin Ja’far Al-Taiyar Bin Abu Talib (PBUT) whose mother is Lady Zainab, daughter of Imam Ali (PBUT), and his brother, Mohammed whose mother is Al-Khawsaa. Among the sons of ‘Aqeel Bin Abu Talib (PBUT), there were Abdurrahman and Ja’far (PBUT). Among the sons of Moslim Bin ‘Aqeel Bin Abu Talib (PBUT), there were Mohammad and his brother, Abdullah. They all were martyred while defending their cousin Imam Hussein (PBUH)[2].

Once again, ‘Ashura provide us a unique image through which we see the beauty of social bonds among kinsfolk as the cousins of Imam Hussein (PBUH) answered the call of honor and defended him against indignity and dishonor.

Scene Twenty: the beauty of courage in self-possession

When we hear the word “courage”, we often think of war or fighting

1 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram – May God bless his soul, p274, transcribed from Tarikh Bin Jarir, v6, p256, from Al-Maqtal, Al-Khawarazmi, v2, p78, and from Lahouf, Bin Tawous, p64.

2 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram – May God bless his soul, p274.

or in general challenging fear in all possible circumstances.

Bin Mandhour defined “courage” as: the strength of heart throughout the severity of war, and severity is agony[1].

According to ethicists, “courage” is: to control the power of rage when embarking on massive issues and to use patience well so that they turn to be praiseworthy[2].

Also, “courage” is: one of the ethical virtues and its fundamental principles from which several qualities are branched like self-possession, bravery, determination, steadfastness, tolerance, tranquility, patience and modesty[3].

Although all these qualities are derived from courage, self-possession is the most significant one as it best reflects the beauty of courage.

“Self-possession” is: the state of staying calm and confident in the face of calamity and indignity and being prepared for more difficult circumstances[4].

These psychoanalytical and ethical descriptions were put into practice in the desert of Karbala and on the day of ‘Ashura, as those warriors showed unlimited courage and self-possession, yet they were well-prepared to undergo even worse situations than they were already experiencing and remain calm.

Al-Qasim Bin Al-Hasan (PBUT) was a true warrior as he reflected the true beauty of courage and self-possession despite his very young age; he charged into battle while reciting:

If you not know me, I am the son of Al-Hassan,

The grandson of the Prophet, the chosen and the trustee;

This is Al-Hussein held captive

Among people who prevented even the rain clouds[5]

Al-Qasim (PBUH) fought fiercely while repeating those lines of poetry with his thunderous voice; he managed to kill thirty five men

1 Lisan Al-‘Arab, v6, p20, stem word “Baas”.

2 Jami’ Al-Sa’adaat, Al-Naraaqi, v1, p69.

3 Moqaddama Fi ‘Ilm Al-Akhlaq, Saiyed Kamal Al-Haidari, p63-64.

4 Ibid.

5 Al-‘Awalim, Al-Bahrani, p278. Ma’alim Al-Madrasatain, Al-‘Askari, v3, p315. Lawa’ej Al-Ashjaan, Saiyed Mohsin Al-Ameen, p175.

despite his young age, then when he stopped to fix his sandal’s thong, unconcerned about to the soldiers surrounding him.

In fact, this is very significant on two levels. First, Al-Qasim (PBUH) was self-possessed and self-assured to such an extent that all those armies seemed less than his sandal’s thong. Second, this specific incident minds us of what Amir Al-Mu’menin (PBUH) said when assessing authority – especially those who were rushing madly to seize power.

Abdullah Bin ‘Abbas said: When I came to Amir Al-Mu’menin (PBUH) in Zi-Qaar, he was repairing his sandal, so he said to me:

> *What is the value of this sandal?*

I said: Worthless. He went on:

> *By God, it is dearer to me than rule you, unless I serve justice and defy injustice*[1].

Therefore, when Al-Qasim (PBUH) bowed to repair his sandal in the battle, he wanted to convey this image and tell them that the authority or the power, for which you are killing the household of the Prophet (PBUH), is even less than my sandal’s thong.

They received the message behind his action and this enraged them, so they decided to deprive his uncle, Imam Hussein (PBUH), of seeing him again. One of the treacherous soldiers came from behind and smote him on the head, and the young Al-Qasim (PBUH) fell on the ground painting with his pure blood a beautiful image of courage and self-possession on the sand of Karbala.

Scene Twenty One: the beauty of fatherhood in ‘Ashura

Historians and battle narrators gave a sentimental description to the condition of Imam Hussein (PBUH) when his son, Ali Al-Akbar, advanced to the battle.

Their descriptions provide us with an aesthetic scene in which the infallible Imam (PBUH) expresses his affection as a father when he

1 Nahj Al-Balagha, v1, p80. Al-Bihar, Al-Majlisi, v32, p76. Majma’ Al-Bahrain, Al-Tarihi, v3, p559, Published by Islamic Culture Office. Asl Al-Shi’a Wa Osouliha, Sheikh Kashif Al-Ghitaa, p193, Published by Imam Ali (PBUH) Foundation. Dirasaat Fi Wilayat Al-Faqeeh Wa Fiqh Al-Dawla Al-Islamiya, Sheikh Al-Montazari, v2, p63.

sees his son is going to meet death. Imam Hussein (PBUH) could not hold in his tears and sadness, and so he walked behind his son and exclaimed: Oh my son, Ali! You are my heartbeats, and it is tears me apart to be away from you.

What a beautiful scene it is to see a heartbroken father bidding farewell to his own son knowing that he will never come back again. Therefore, we have a painful yet beautiful description on the condition of Imam Hussein (PBUH) recorded by those historians and battle narrators:

"Al-Hussein (PBUH) could not control himself and began shedding tears, and then shouted at 'Omar Bin Sa'd: What is it with you? May God break your ties of kinship as you broke my ties of kinship. You did not preserve my relation with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), so May God empowers he who slays you on your own bed.

After that, he raised his glorious gray head towards the heavens and said: O Lord! Bear witness upon them, as the person who advanced to them had the largest resemblance to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), physically and morally, and we looked at him whenever we longed for Your Prophet. O Lord! Deprive them of the blessings of the earth, disperse them and tear them apart; let their rulers not be pleased with them, as they called us to support us, then they rushed to fight us".

At this moment, Imam Hussein (PBUH) recited this Holy Verse from the Noble Quran:

> *(Surely Allah chose Adam and Nuh and the descendants of Ibrahim and the descendants of Imran above the nations ۞ Offspring one of the other; and Allah is Hearing, Knowing)*[1] [2].

Scene Twenty Two: the beauty of brotherhood in sincerity

This form of beauty and its purpose can be understood through the visit Abul-Fadhl Al-'Abbas (PBUH) paid to his brother Imam

1 3.33-34

2 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram – May God bless his soul, p271. Al-Bihar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p43. Al-Lahouf, Tawous, p67. Al-Majalis Al-Fakhira, 'Allama Abdul-Hussein Sharafiddin – May God bless his soul, p242, Published by Al-Ma'arif Foundation. Lawa'ej Al-Ashjan, Saiyed Mohsin Al-Ameen, p169. Al-Maqtal, Al-Khawarazmi, v2, p30.

Hussein (PBUH). We will discuss this aesthetic scene using a Hadith from Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) in which he talked about this gracious visit and the beauty it embodied on different levels.

Actually, every virtue or moral quality has to have manifestations so that it would be seen by eyes followed by minds. Although there is a difference between abstract beauty and concrete beauty, it still represents one fact, that is, it tremendously attracts hearts. However, it takes a sincere and earnest heart in order to be able to identify beauty and comprehend its manifestations.

Therefore, we can say that the beauty of brotherhood on the day of ‘Ashura was based on three main pillars, namely “sincerity”, “commiseration” and “support” that together form an immune and solid pyramid.

First pillar: sincerity

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) said:

> *“I bear witness that you were sincere to Allah, to His Messenger and to your brother”*[1].

Here Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) refers to a very special quality that distinguished Al-‘Abbas Bin Ali (PBUT) as the brother of Imam Hussein (PBUH); it was his sincerity that not only created a beautiful scene of brotherhood but also revealed the high level of faith on his part.

Linguistically speaking, “Nosh” means sincerity.

Al-Asma’i said: “Nasih” is “Khalis” (pure) like pure honey, and so every pure thing has to be sincere[2].

Al-Zobaidi said: “Nosh”, “Naseeha” and “Monasaha” (sincere advice or counseling) all mean: to desire what is good for others and guiding them to it.

Bin Al-Atheer also said: “Nasseha” is a word that can be expressed in a sentence: it is to desire what is good for the one you counsel; this meaning cannot be conveyed in only one word.

Moreover, Al-Khitabi said: “Nasseha” is a very general word and it means taking possession of good fortune on the part of the

1 Dhiaa Al-Saleheen, p232.
2 Al-Sihah, Al-Jawhari, v1, p410.

counseled; it is always said that Arabic is about having short words and being brief, and thus no sentence or phrase in Arabic can express the meaning of a word.

He went on to say: “Nosh Al-Khalous” (sincere advice) is absolute and “Naseeha” (sincere or advice) is a comprehensive word derived from the Arabic stem word “Nasaha” that has two main meaning: one is sincerity and purity, and the second is harmony and concord.

Now that we learned the lexical meaning, it becomes quite obvious that the word “Nasaha” in the above Hadith by Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) actually means “Khalasa” (being sincere and honest).

In fact, Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) went on to emphasize that Abul-Fadhl Al-‘Abbas (PBUH) was indeed sincere towards his Lord, his Prophet and his brother as he said:

> *“…and I bear witness that you were exceedingly sincere and that you strived to the highest degree”.*

Therefore, sincerity was one of the main pillars that formed the concept of brotherhood and reflected its beauty on the day of ‘Ashura.

Second pillar: commiseration

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) said:

> *“Thus, blessed be the brother that commiserates his brother”.*

Linguistically speaking, “Yowasi” (to console) means “Yo’azzi” (to give comfort).

Now, “Oswa” and “Iswa” both mean “solace”, that is, what makes you feel less sad and become more patient; “Oswa” also means “example”, so we say: That person is my example[1].

Therefore, these meanings lead us to the fact that Al-‘Abbas (PBUH) was indeed a true brother as he gave comfort to Imam Hussein (PBUH) in times of ordeal and sorrow. At the same time, we can say that he was the one in whom a sorrowful person could find solace or comfort.

Moreover, when Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) said:

> *“Blessed be the brother that commiserates his brother”.*

1 Al-Sihah, Al-Jawhari, v6, p226.

he was actually emphasizing that the source of patience, solace and commiseration was Imam Hussein (PBUH), that is, this virtue or quality was taken from Imam Hussein (PBUH) as he was the leader and the example who Abul-Fadhl Al-‘Abbas (PBUH) always followed.

Third pillar: support

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) said:

“A brother is he who defends his brother”.

Here, Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) refers to the third main pillar that formed the concept of brotherhood and its beauty on the day of ‘Ashura.

Now, in order to understand this specific quality, we should see what linguists suggested in this regard. The Arabic word “Dafa’a” means “to defend” and “to repulse”, so we say: May God defend you against evil, or I pray God repulse evil from me[1].

The beautiful meaning linguists offered for the word “Dafa’a” is: that great thing that is driven away by a great person[2].

This means that Abul-Fadhl Al-‘Abbas (PBUH) was supporting his brother to a great extent, and that we can measure the amount of his support or defense by looking at the amount of thing he repulsed or drove away, and in this sense, it was that huge army numbering over thirty thousand soldiers against only eighteen men from Bani Hashim as well as seventy two companions of Imam Hussein (PBUH).

At this point, we have to refer to another word, namely “Modafi’ ” meaning “defender” and also “lion”[3].

This meaning reveals one of the beautiful aspects of brotherhood which manifested itself in Al-‘Abbas (PBUH) on the day of ‘Ashura, as he supported his brother, Imam Hussein (PBUH), against those monsters and repulsed their attacks like a lion.

Having said that, we can understand how hard and painful it was for Imam Hussein (PBUH) to lose such a great brother whose absence had a huge impact on him. That is why, when Imam Hussein (PBUH) came to his slaughtered brother, he sat next to him

1 Taaj Al-‘Arous, Al-Zobaidi, v11, p115-118.
2 Ibid.
3 Taaj Al-‘Arous, Al-Zobaidi, v11, p115-118.

and said:

"My back has now broken, my strength has lessened and my enemy has rejoiced at my misfortune".

These powerful words reflected the strong bond between Imam Hussein (PBUH) and his brother, Abul-Fadhl Al-'Abbas (PBUH). It was a beautiful scene of brotherhood manifested itself in "sincerity, commiseration and support" in times of calamity and adversity.

Scene Twenty Three: the beauty of expatriation when longing for family and friends

Obviously, people do not choose to live far away from their homeland unless they have to, and as the famous Arab proverb says:

"Expatriation is anguish"[1].

A famous line of poetry also says:

It is well said that expatriation is separation

As it is like slaughter for a free man[2]

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) himself was forced to leave his birthplace, his family and his people as he was imprisoned in Shi'b (defile) Abu Talib (PBUH) in order to suffer exile in his own native land.

In fact, several members of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) also had to live in exile like Imam Hussein (PBUH), Imam Mousa Bin Ja'far (PBUH), Imam Ali Bin Mousa Al-Ridha (PBUH) as well as the rest of Imams (PBUT) after Imam Al-Ridha (PBUH).

However, the most painful and sorrowful expatriation was that of Imam Hussein (PBUH), especially those moments that he was all alone surrounded by swords, spears and arrows from every side.

Therefore, when Imam Al-Baqir (PBUH) used to address his followers who were living in exile, he always asked them to have patience and find solace in recalling the expatriation of Imam Hussein (PBUH) in the desert of Karbala.

Mohammad Bin Moslim said : I went to Medina while I had this

1 Tafsir Al-Alousi, v12, p191, Interpretation of Yousif Chapter.
2 Ibid.

heavy pain. Hence, Abu Ja’far (PBUH) sent me a drink with a young boy; it was covered with a handkerchief and the young boy passed it to me and said: Drink it. I was ordered not to leave until you drink it.

I had that drink that smelled like musk; it was cold and tasted good. When I finished the drink, the young boy said to me: Your master wanted you to come in case you drank it.

I did not even have the strength to stand on my feet, but soon as the drink went down my throat, I felt full of vigor and rushed to meet Abu Ja’far (PBUH). When I arrived at his door, I asked for permission to enter, so I heard his voice: Be Well! Enter.

I entered while crying. I saluted him and kissed his hand and his head, so he said to me:

“What makes you cry, O Muhammad?”

I said: I give my life for you! I cry for my expatriation, for this wide distance and for the inability to stay here near you and to look at you. He said to me:

> *“As for the inability, this is how God made our supporters and our followers, as He let afflictions come to them quickly. As for what you said about expatriation, the believers are all expatriates in this world, suffering a relapse until they depart this house to meet their God.*

And as for what you mentioned on the wide gap, you should take Abu Abdullah (PBUH) as your example as he was in a remote land away from us at the Euphrates. As what you mentioned about your desire to be near us and look at consider us, despite your inability, God knows what is in your heart and you will be rewarded for that”.

At this moment, he asked me:

> *“Do you go to the grave of Al-Hussein (PBUH)?”*

I said: Yes, I do with fear and caution. He said:

> *“The more fear you have, the more reward you get. Whoever is afraid of coming to him, Allah reassures them on the day people rise for the Lord of the Universe. They shall depart with forgiveness, the angels shall salute them, the Prophet (PBUH) shall pray for them and God’s grace and blessing shall be upon them; no evil shall afflict them as Allah shall be pleased with*

them"[1].

Therefore, the believers who were forced to live in exile should follow the example of the Master of the Martyrs (PBUH) and contemplate on the beauty of expatriation that manifested itself in his longing and his pure tears for his family members and his companions.

In this beautiful scene, Imam Hussein (PBUH) looked around as if trying to find any of his household, his companions or his supporters, but all of them were lying on the sands of Karbala, so he addressed them with these words:

> *"O Moslim Bin 'Aqeel. O Hani Bin 'Orwa. O Habib Bin Modhahir. O Zohair Bin Al-Qain. O Yazid Bin Modhahir. O Yahya Bin Katheer. O Hilal Bin Nafi'. O Ibrahim Bin Al-Hosain. O 'Omair Bin Al-Mota'. O Asad Al-Kalbi. O Abdullah Bin 'Aqeel. O Moslim Bin 'Awsaja. O Dawoud Bin Al-Tirmah. O Al-Hor Al-Riahi. O Abdullah Bin 'Aqeel. O Ali Bin Al-Hussein.*
>
> *O pure heroes. O true warriors. I am calling out for you, so why do you not answer? Do you not hear me? Are you asleep?! Please, awaken. Does death prevent you from supporting your Imam?! Here are the women of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) grown thin, so get up, O noblemen, and defend the Household of the Prophet against the tyrants and villains.*

Alas, death brought you to the ground and this perfidious life betrayed you, otherwise you would have answered my call and come to support me. Here we are, afflicted by your departure, yet we shall follow you. We are from Allah and to Him we shall return"[2].

These gracious words present us with a unique aesthetic scene in which we see expatriation in its most beautiful form as Imam Hussein (PBUH) expresses his longing for his family members, his companions and his supporters so that they give him comfort in those hard times.

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1 Kamil Al-Ziaraat, Bin Qolawaih, p463. Wasael Al-Shi'a, Al-Hor Al-'Ameli, v14, p458. Al-Ikhtisas, Al-Mofid – May God be pleased with him, p53. Madinat Al-Ma'ajiz, Al-Bahrani, v5, p125. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v46, p334. Kashf Al-Litham, Al-Fadhil Al-Hindi, v9, p286.

2 Nasikh Al-Tawarikh, v2, p377. Ma'ali Al-Sebtain, v2, p19. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf, p133.

Scene Twenty Four: the beauty of self-assurance when being outnumbered

In different occasions, we showed several beautiful virtues that were formed in times of agony and pain. One of these occasions was when Imam Hussein (PBUH) was “outnumbered”.

Actually, the Arabic word, “makthour”, means overwhelmed, outnumbered and overpowered[1].

Now, on the day of ‘Ashura, Imam Hussein (PBUH) was not only besieged and outnumbered, but also his children, his family and his companions were brutally killed before him. Despite this painful scene, Imam Hussein (PBUH) showed strong faith and self-assurance when facing those vicious people so much so that they could not confront him and ran away every time he charged at them.

Those who witnessed this beautiful scene were hugely astonished to such an extent that Abdullah Bin ‘Amer Bin Yaghouth said:

“I have never seen anyone outnumbered and whose children, family and companions killed, yet self-assured, steadfast and intrepid like him. The men retreated away from him whenever he charged at them and no one dared to face him”[2].

This aesthetic scene that had Abdullah Bin ‘Amer bewildered and lost in thought was mainly due to the imperturbability and self-assurance on the part of Imam Hussein (PBUH). Therefore, every believer surrounded with doubts and sufferings can learn from the bravery and self-assurance of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) although he was outnumbered by enemy armies.

Scene Twenty Five: the beauty of self-denial despite neediness and scarcity

We can definitely say that ‘Ashura was all about neediness and scarcity, particularly basic needs like water, food and security, not to mention the fact that there was a large group of children and women.

Nevertheless, history recorded two occasions in this epic day that reflected the beauty of self-denial and selflessness through

1 Lisan Al-‘Arab, Bin Mandhour, v5, p133.

2 Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram – May God bless his soul, p288.

neediness and scarcity. In other words, this specific moral virtue manifests itself in times of neediness and scarcity.

First occasion

The first occasion in chronological order was when Abul-Fadhl Al-'Abbas (PBUH) went down to the river in order to fill the skin vessel with water and carry them back to the camp of his brother, Al-Hussein (PBUH). However, when he touched the water and felt its coldness, he refused to quench his thirst despite the fact that he had not drunk any water for three days and that he had to fight against four thousand cavalrymen[1], led by 'Amr Bin Al-Hajjaj, in charge of the Euphrates to get to the water.

Although drinking water would not affect his loyalty to his brother in any way, he refused to have any water and favored his brother over himself. He dipped out some water to quench his thirst but when he remembered his brother and the children waiting for that water, he refrained from drinking and recited these lines of poetry:

Oh mortal nature! Shame on you after Al-Hussein;

You would not even be after him.

This is Hussein facing death

And you drink cold water!

By God, this is against the practice of my religion[2].

That is also why Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) bore witness to that and said:

"You were exceedingly sincere and that you strived to the highest degree".

This explicitly points towards the moral virtues of this great figure and the beauty of theses virtues in difficult times of scarcity and neediness which should be examples for all humanity at all times.

Second occasion

The beauty of self-denial manifested itself again on the day of

1 Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p41. Al-Dam'a Al-Sakba, v4, p322.

2 Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf Al-Azdi, p179. Yanabi' Al-Mawadda, Al-Qandouzi Al-Shafe'i, v3, p67. Maqtal Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Saiyed Al-Maqram, p281. Absaar Al-'Ain, Al-Samawi, p62.

‘Ashura when Imam Hussein (PBUH) rode his horse and charged at thousands of soldiers led by Al-A’war Al-Salami and ‘Amr Bin Al-Hajjaj Al-Zobaidi; he stopped at the Euphrates and let his horse drink saying:

> *“You are thirsty and I’m thirsty, but by God, I will not even taste this water until you drink”.*

The horse lifted its head as if it heard the words of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and stopped drinking, therefore Imam Hussein (PBUH) said: *“Drink. I will drink too”*, and dipped out some water.

At this moment, a horseman said: O Abu Abdullah! Enjoy drinking water as I violated your honor? Imam Hussein (PBUH) poured the water off his hand and rushed back to find the tent intact[1].

One again, the epic of ‘Ashura draws a beautiful scene in which we see a perfect manifestation of self-denial and selflessness on the part of Imam Hussein (PBUH), his family members as well as his companions in a time they are most in need in order to teach the whole world what moral virtues are in their best forms.

Scene Twenty Six: the beauty of childhood in giving pleasure to the beholders

I asked several mothers about the places of beauty in childhood. Some said it lies in its innocence and others said they saw it in their playing and tenderness. Other mothers saw the beauty of childhood in the very first words they utter as well as their playful behavior and so on.

Looking at these opinions, I came to the conclusion that the beauty childhood lies in the pleasure it gives to the beholders, in the sense that people unconsciously smile when they look at children. The reason behind this smile could be as simple as an expression of gratitude for the pleasure they let into the heart of the beholders or a message of love that cannot be read but those pure eyes.

However, childhood has its own unique beauty on the day of ‘Ashura as we see Imam Hussein (PBUH) walking through the dead

1 Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr Ashob, v4, p58. Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p51. Madinat Al-Ma’ajiz, Al-Bahrani, v3, p505. Al-‘Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p294.

bodies of his beloved people with a smile on his face although his eldest, son who resembled the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), was brutally killed and beheaded in the battlefield and his infant son was slaughtered in his lap by an arrow.

This bereaved father was smiling despite his agony to thank his slaughtered children for all the happiness and pleasure they gave him. Moreover, Imam Hussein (PBUH) was smiling because he knew they were in a far better place with their grandfather, Imam Ali (PBUH), their grandmother, Fatima Al-Zahra (PBUH), their uncles, Hamza Bin Abdul-Mottalib (PBUH) and Ja'far Al-Taiyar, their cousins from Bani Hashim and more importantly with their great-grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

This perfect aesthetic scene of painful tears mixed with a grateful smile can only be seen in the desert of Karbala and on the day of 'Ashura so that we appreciate the beauty of childhood through a simple smile[1].

Scene Twenty Seven: the beauty of preserving Arab lineage

In this very scene, we will be dealing with a diverse social issue that cannot be fully discussed here, so we will only focus on a part that serves the purpose of this topic. Talking about races, genders, and ethnic groups needs specialists from different social sciences, but here, we are mainly talking about different Arab tribes whose lineage made a major contribution to the beauty of 'Ashura.

The Arabic word ('Arab) refers to a member of a particular Arab tribe; (A'areeb) is the plural of (A'raab) meaning: Bedouins or nomads who are Arabs of the desert[2].

('Arab) – also ('Orb) – means a lineage of well-known families; the opposite is ('Ajam) meaning foreigners or non-Arabs[3].

The beauty of Arab lineage (Hasab) comes from the firmly established honor inherited from forefathers and their glorious

1 On the slaughter of the infant child, see also: Yanabi' Al-Mawadda, Al-Qandouzi, v3, p78. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Khawarazmi, v2, p32. Al-Lahouf, Bin Tawous, p116. Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p46. Nafs Al-Mahmoum, p349.

2 Al-'Ain, Al-Farahidi, v2, p128.

3 Lisan Al-'Arab, Bin Mandhour, v1, p586.

actions which are considered to be their source of pride. This is the reason why Arabs always tend to trace their back ancestry and preserve it.

Therefore, Imam Hussein (PBUH) wanted to use the deterrent value of these social bonds in order to prevent his enemies from committing misdeeds or atrocious acts that would lead to harming the reputation of their tribes.

In fact, Imam Hussein (PBUH) saw that they were planning to separate him from the tents of women – female members of his family as well as his companions’ and supporters’ – as ‘Omar Bin Sa’d shouted at his soldiers: This is the son of “the free full” (Anza’ Al-Bateen)[1]; this is the son of the killer of the Arabs! Attack him from every side.

Four thousand arrows were shot towards him and horsemen came between him and his tents, therefore Imam Hussein (PBUH) exclaimed:

“O followers of Abu Sofyan! If you have no faith and if you are not afraid of Doomsday, be free in your life and return to your lineage if you are Arabs as you claim”.

Shimr shouted: What are you saying, O son of Fatima?

Imam Hussein (PBUH) said: “It is me that is fighting you, and women have no obligations in this, so keep your monsters away from my women as long as I am alive”[2].

This social discourse identifies the factors that can adjust human behaviors so that they refrain from falling in vice. In case of ‘Ashura, we see some oppressors abusing power to lead a life of dissipation, not to mention the hatred they had for the household of Abu Talib (PBUT). Despite this fact, Imam Hussein (PBUH) was persistent to speak to them and give them advice hoping he could correct their behaviors, so he begins with:

“O followers of Abu Sofyan!”

First, Imam Hussein (PBUH) identifies the roots for this group of people, and second, he gives a description of their ideological and

1 He is referring to Imam Ali (PBUH) whose beautiful features were discussed earlier.

2 Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p51.

political affinity:

1. If you have no faith
2. If you are not afraid of Doomsday.

As a matter of fact, Imam Hussein (PBUH) wants them to follow the right path and adjust their behaviors as human beings through growing faith and having fear from the Judgment Day. But, when they refuse to accept that, Imam Hussein (PBUH) asks them to *"return"* to their roots and behave according to their traditional customs and values, namely:

1. To be free in your life
2. To return to your lineage if you are Arabs as you claim.

The first factor is psychological or mental and it is based on liberating themselves from self-slavery and earthly desires, and the second factor is sociological or social and it is based on adherence to their Arab lineage and the values attached to that.

However, they killed the delight of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) to prove that not only they had no faith and no fear of the Judgment Day, but they also had no respect for their traditional customs and values.

This is another scene from the day of 'Ashura manifesting its beauty through Arab lineage, which is considered to be their source of pride, and preserving Arab traditional values.

Scene Twenty Eight: the beauty of gallantry in giving aid

It is obvious that all the events of 'Ashura took place in an atmosphere of war, starting from concentration of armies to besieging Imam Hussein (PBUH), his household and his companions in the land of Karbala, and ending with forcing him to choose between complying with the desire of the tyrant of his time and unwillingly pledging allegiance to him, that is, accepting humiliation or fighting against that tyrant and face slaughter; Imam Hussein (PBUH) preferred to choose the latter.

In the interim, Imam Hussein (PBUH) inspected the surrounding hills and passages and then began building defenses as he along with his small number of companions dug a trench behind the tents.

In such an atmosphere, they were suffering from hunger and thirst

as they had no water for three days; women and children went through a psychological and economic warfare prior to the start of the battle; They not only were hungry and thirsty for several days, they were worried and fearful of what those monsters would do to their guardians and defenders.

When the first rays of dawn broke across the desert of Karbala, thousands of soldiers marched towards the encampment of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and his blessed household and companions; the battle began and the spears and the arrows and the swords interlaced to shape the aesthetic and the unforgettable epic of ‘Ashura.

In such difficult atmospheres, a woman cried for help to be rescued from the lowest, the vilest and the most despicable creatures on earth, but who would come to help her in this ferocious battle?! At this moment, the masses of soldiers were pushed away; the son of Ali Bin Abu Talib (PBUT) charged at them while reciting these lines of poetry:

I am Al-Hussein Bin Ali

I am determined not to bow

I will protect my father’s household

I will proceed with the religion of the Prophet

This beautiful scene had such an impact on Abdullah Bin Yaghouth that he said:

“I have never seen anyone outnumbered and whose children, family and companions killed, yet self-assured, steadfast and intrepid like him. The men retreated away from him whenever he charged at them and no one dared to face him”.

After that, ‘Omar Bin Sa’d shouted at his soldiers: This is the son of “the free full” (Anza’ Al-Bateen); this is the son of the killer of the Arabs! Attack him from every side. Therefore, four thousand arrows were shot towards Imam Hussein (PBUH) as horsemen also came between him and his tents[1].

1 Motheer Al-Ahzan, Bin Nima Al-Hilli, p54. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, p50. Al-‘Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p293. Mostadrak Safinat Al-Bihar, Al-Shahroudi, p372. Al-Kamil Fil-Tarikh, Bin Al-Atheer, v4, p77. Al-Bidaya Wa Al-Nihaya, Bin Katheer, v8, p204. Al-Lahouf, Bin Tawous, p70. Tarjamat Al- →

Despite the severe and fierce atmospheres, we see the beauty of gallantry and bravery on the part of Imam Hussein (PBUH) when he rushes to give aid and defend his women.

After that, Imam Hussein (PBUH) charged at four thousand soldiers led ‘Amr Bin Al-Hajjaj Al-Zobaidi to reach the Euphrates; when he arrived at the stream, he dipped out some water, but a horseman said to him: O Abu Abdullah! Enjoy drinking water as I violated your honor? Imam Hussein (PBUH) poured the water and rushed back towards the tent[1].

Here, we see an image of self-denial – that we discussed earlier in “scene twenty five” – intertwined with an image of gallantry at one and the same time, as Imam Hussein (PBUH) not only charged bravely towards the enemy lines in order to bring back some water for the thirsty women and children, but he also refused to quench his thirst when he learned that they were in need for help although he was fighting fiercely in that heat against thousands of soldiers.

It is such a breathtaking and mind-blowing scene in which we see a beautiful manifestation of gallantry on the part of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) when he hastens to give aid on the basis of need.

Scene Twenty Nine: the beauty of innocence when slaughtered against all values

If we want to point at one person gathering all the virtues and moral values, he would be the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and if we want to point at one person carrying all his legacy, we would find it with Imam Hussein (PBUH), but if we want to search for innocence, we would find it in childhood, especially those early years.

One of the wonders of Karbala and its distinctive characteristic is that we see innocence and values encompassed in one place to shape a matchless scene throughout history.

When Imam Hussein (PBUH) fell from his horse to the ground, his enemies began cheering and surrounded him; he was unable to

← Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Bin Sa’d, p74. Al-Majalis Al-Fakhira, ‘Allama Sharafiddin, p247.

1 Al-Manaqib, Bin Shihr Ashob, v4, p58. Bihar Al-Anwar, v45, p51. Madinat Al-Ma’ajiz, Al-Bahrani, v3, p505. Al-‘Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p294.

stand up, so his eleven-year-old nephew, Abdullah Bin Al-Hassan Bin Ali Bin Abu Talib (PBUT) ran towards him. His aunt, Lady Zainab (PBUH), tried to stop him, but Abdullah managed to get to his uncle, Imam Hussein (PBUH).

He saw Bahr Bin Ka’b holding his sword high to smite Imam Hussein (PBUH); this young boy shouted: O son of the wicked! Are you attacking my uncle? Bahr Bin Ka’b burst in anger and shifted his strike to Abdullah; he tried to shield himself with his hand, but the sword chopped his hand and it hung down being only attached to the skin. The boy cried out: “O uncle!” and fell in his uncle’s lap. Imam Hussein (PBUH) took Abdullah in his arms and said:

“O my nephew! Endure what afflicted you and sacrifice for God’s reward as you will join your righteous fathers”[1].

They were not content with this and they killed the injured boy to give vent to their hatred for the household of Prophet Mohammed (PBUT). Harmala Bin Kahil Al-Asadi shot an arrow at Abdullah and slaughtered him in his uncle’s lap[2].

I do not know what to wonder about here! Should I wonder how a young innocent boy was slaughtered while he was defending the Mohammedan values, or wonder about the patience of Imam Hussein (PBUH) or about him asking his nephew, whose hand was hanging to the skin, to have patience?!

However, what I am certain about is that this unique scene reveals the beauty of forbearance in times of calamity while it is embracing the beauty of innocence when slaughtered against all values.

Final Scene: the beauty of Imam Hussein (PBUH) on the scorching desert of Karbala

We have already given a full description about the beauty of the

1 Here, Imam Hussein (PBUH) raised his hands and said: O Lord! Deprive them of the blessings of the earth, disperse them and tear them apart; let their rulers not be pleased with them, as they called us to support us, then they rushed to fight us.

2 Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p53. Al-‘Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p296. Tarikh Al-Tabari, v4, p344. Maqtal Al-Hussein (PBUH), Abi Makhnaf, p191. Al-Dor Al-Nadheem, Bin Hatem Al-‘Ameli, p557. Absaar Al-‘Ain, Al-Samawi, p74.

Imam Hussein (PBUH), however we will specifically be concentrating on his gracious beauty on the epic day of ‘Ashura that manifested itself to all people, whether they were fighting with him or against him.

One might ask about the difference between these two beauties and the way those attending the battle perceived their manifestations?

As a matter of fact, men and women afflicted by disasters and calamities undergo physical and mental changes as they always look drawn, tired, pale and confused and they suffer from high blood pressure, disorientation, shaky limbs and voice, rapid heartbeat, eating disorder and dispersion of thoughts. This might result in abnormal behavior, permanent disabilities like losing sight and paralysis, sudden fainting or even death.

But, what was the effect of calamities and adversities on the delight of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), Imam Hussein Bin Ali (PBUT)? Did his distinctive beauty change? Were his beautiful features and qualities affected? Did he remain the same Imam and leader that filled the minds and the hearts with joy? What was the condition of Abu Abdullah (PBUH)?

The beauty of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) not only did not change but the more the calamities enlarged, the more it grew and one could easily recognize his beautiful and gracious features.

This unique image preoccupied the one who advanced to cut off the head of Imam Hussein (PBUH) after he fell on the ground. His killer was not able to move, because he was fascinated by the beauty and graciousness of Imam Hussein (PBUH).

It was as if he was wondering: How can your hand violate such beauty?! How much time do you need to cut off all the beauty he gathered in himself from Adam to Mohammad (PBUT)?! Woe unto you! All the messages, nations, books, plates and sheets are recorded on the pages of this light flowing from his forehead.

Therefore, the man returned bewildered and confused while dragging his sword behind him, as if the sword was kissing the ground and thanking the Lord for it was not in a hand that would kill Al-Hussein (PBUH).

A group of people came and asked him why he did not kill Imam Hussein (PBUH). He replied: “I stood upon him as he was breathing his last. By God, I have never seen a dying man stained with his own blood more gracious than him or a more luminous face than his. The light of his face and the beauty of his dignity diverted me from the idea of killing him”[1].

This was how some of his enemies behaved and reacted when they saw the manifestations of his beauty, not to mention the reaction of his household and his companions.

1 Al-Lahouf Fi Qatla Al-Tofouf, Bin Tawous, p75, Published by Anwar Al-Hoda, Qom. Motheer Al-Ahzan, Bin Nima Al-Hilli, p57. Madinat Al-Ma’ajiz, Al-Bahrani, v4, p77. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p57. Al-‘Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p301. Lawa’ej Al-Ashjan, Saiyed Mohsin Al-Ameen, p189. Al-Majalis Al-Fakhira, ‘Allama Sharafiddin, p329.

According to these sources and references, it was Hilal Bin Nafi’ that advanced to kill Imam Hussein (PBUH) and the reason why he said what mentioned above was that he was with the army of ‘Omar Bin Sa’d and he heard people say: Hussein was killed, so he advanced to find out by himself. However, the fact that he said: The light of his face diverted me from the idea of killing him, shows that he went towards Imam Hussein (PBUH) with the intention of killing him, but he later claimed he only went to find out because he heard people say: Hussein was killed.

Topic Seven

The Concept of Aesthetics to Lady Zainab (PBUH)

Foreword

There are various concepts on aesthetics adopted by philosophers, intellectuals, poets and artists, as these concepts even vary from one scholar to another, each relying on their perspective to life. For example, the perspective of artists is different from that of a poet and an author.

In addition, time has its own effect on changing the perspectives, especially the perspectives about aesthetics. Therefore, a philosopher from the Greek era could have a completely different view on beauty from a philosopher from the modern era.

Here, we should also remember that beauty can take different forms and shapes; it can be a perspective, a painting, a poem, a book or a noble behavior that delights people and makes them contemplate on the learned lessons.

Now, when we talk about Lady Zainab (PBUH), we can obviously see that her concept is different from that of philosophers and intellectuals in the sense it is a unique concept and it is compatible with different times and eras no matter if there are different views and perspectives.

Now, let us move on to have a look at the concept of beauty according to Lady Zainab (PBUH).

In fact, we see her standing in the house of tyrants and oppressors who gathered to rejoice at her calamity while the heads of her siblings, her children and her blood relatives were put around the courtyard. Lady Zainab (PBUH) was a lonely woman surrounded by other women, bereaved of their own children, as well as terrified children; they were all looking up at Lady Zainab (PBUH). If she

cried, they would cry, and if she restrained, they would restrain too. If she talked, they would listen, and if she kept silent, they would contemplate and learn.

The tyrant of the time stood up said: We are the victors. The slavish flatterers cheered for him as if he had bewitched them. Then the Pharaoh of his time turned to Lady Zainab (PBUH) and mockingly said: Praise be to God Who exposed you and killed you and proved you liars.

Many of the attendees thought these words had their impact on the daughter of Haydar (PBUT), but she refuted his allegations with words heavier than mountains, as she said:

> *"Praise be to God Who blessed us with His Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), and wholly sanctified us from abomination. He indeed exposes the lecherous and proves the treacherous liars, but not us".*

The Pharaoh of Kufa lost this round despite his spell, as he did not know Lady Zainab (PBUH) was speaking with the tongue of Imam Ali (PBUH). He had another attempt hoping to succeed this time; therefore, he summoned all the abomination of his mother, Somaiya, and his grandmother, Marjana, and uttered his last words:

How do you see what God did to your brother and your household?

Lady Zainab (PBUH) said:

> *"I see nothing but beauty. God foreordained for them to be killed so they advanced to meet their fate. God will bring you and them together so that you dispute and quarrel and you will see who is to overcome. May your mother be afflicted by your death, O son of Marjana"*[1].

Bin Ziad – May God's curse be upon him – became angry and was about to move towards her, but 'Amr Bin Horaith said to him: She is a woman, and women cannot be reproached for what they utter.

Therefore, Bin Ziad said: My heart is rejoiced by the death of your

1 Motheer Al-Ahzan, Bin Nima Al-Hilli, p71. Al-Fotouh, Bin A'tham, v5, p122. Al-Lahouf Fi Qatla Al-Tofouf, Bin Tawous, p94. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p116. Al-'Awalim – Al-Imam Al-Hussein (PBUH), Al-Bahrani, p382. A'yan Al-Shi'a, Saiyed Mohsin Al-Ameen, v1, p614.

tyrant Hussein and your disobedient household. She replied:

> *"I swear you did kill my master, slay my offspring and exterminate my descent. If this is your joy, hence you are rejoiced".*

Bin Ziad said: This is rhyme! I swear your father was a rhyming poet.

Lady Zainab (PBUH) said:

> *"O Bin Ziad! A woman has nothing to do with rhyming! Even if I could rhyme, I still do not wonder to see someone killing his leaders although he knows they will take revenge on him in the Hereafter"*[1].

After this huge defeat and humiliation, Bin Ziad – May God's curse be upon him – found no way to avenge himself on but the head of the delight of Prophet (PBUH).

Accordingly, the emergence of this concept was unique in terms of time, place, thought, visions, people, circumstances, factors, pain, feelings and challenges; history has never known and never will know that the concept of beauty started out of a heart full of pain and suffering. Despite all that, it was able to see beauty shining out of those faces that were covered with dust on the desert of Karbala and on day of 'Ashura.

Indeed, Lady Zainab (PBUH) "saw nothing but beauty", because she saw those faces that "if asked God to remove a mountain, He would remove it for them", as she always used to hear the beautiful voices of her grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), her father, Imam Ali (PBUH), her mother, Fatima Al-Zahra (PBUH), and her two brothers Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein (PBUT).

In fact, Lady Zainab (PBUH) grew up in beauty, and therefore, she lived in beauty and experienced nothing but beauty. Consequently, when she looked at the bodies of her dear ones, it was as if a new life was given to her so that she would stand in the face of ignorance, injustice tyranny and humiliation in order to spread knowledge, justice, freedom and pride.

This was the concept of beauty according to Lady Zainab (PBUH); it was either to live beautifully or to die beautifully.

1 Motheer Al-Ahzan, Bin Nima Al-Hilli, p71. Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p116.

First issue: the aesthetics of eloquence in the speech of Lady Zainab (PBUH)

Of the main pillars in the speech of Lady Zainab (PBUH) were the beauty of discourse and the power of eloquence that reflected the depth of her faith and thought and that fascinated the listeners. This was how she managed to expose the falsehoods 'Obaidullah Bin Ziad spread about the noble household of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUT) and with which he was trying to poison the ears of the audience.

For that reason, Bin Ziad tried to obscure the beauty of eloquence and logic in the speech of Lady Zainab (PBUH) and therefore he said: This is rhyme[1]! I swear your father was a rhyming poet.

At this moment, Lady Zainab (PBUH) replied:

> *"O Bin Ziad! A woman has nothing to do with rhyming! Even if I could rhyme, I still do not wonder to see someone killing his leaders although he knows they will take revenge on him in the Hereafter".*

The beautiful and powerful words of this great woman had a huge role in minimizing the evil attempts of Bin Ziad – May God's curse be upon him – to distort the image of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT), so much that he was unable to respond with even one word and that is why, he avenged himself on the head of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH).

1 The Arabic word, Saja' (rhyme) – the plural is Asjaa' or Asajee', refers to words that have very similar sounds like it is in poetry (Al-'Ain, Al-Farahidi, v1, p214).

In view of that, “those familiar with Arabic language are fully aware of the fact that the term rhetoric is often interchangeable with the term eloquence and that they both are associated with discourse. This is due to the beautiful qualities that they add to a text like serenity, purity, magnificence, excellence, skillfulness, clarity and precision significance and choice in order to have a well-adorned, refined and cohesive text or discourse, away from any form of limitation, weakness, and impurity and incoherence”[1].

Any scholar in this regard can easily notice that speakers are not satisfied with delivering their speeches directly, as they use rhetorical methods like figures of speech and ornamented expressions to add to the beauty of their words. Therefore, every material containing rhetoric and eloquence has to have a form of aesthetic value.

This beauty is part and parcel of rhetorical creativity, as it is also the case with any form of human creativity, in the sense that the linguistic, grammatical and literary mysteries of Arabic sentences made this language so powerful and so fascinating. This happened with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) as he listened to ‘Amr Bin Al-Ahtam and said with admiration:

“Some discourse has its own enchantment…”[2].

1 Jamaaliyat Al-Khabar Wa Al-Inshaa, a rhetorical study by Dr. Hussein Jom’a.

2 Ibid. The Noble Hadith was reported by Siouti in his Jame’ Al-Sagheer Min Hadith Al-Basheer Al-Nazeer, v1, p231, Hadith No. 2456.

Second issue: the correlation between the concept of beauty and the concept of monotheism in the Zainabi thought

One of the main concepts that manifested itself in the speech of Lady Zainab (PBUH) was the concept of monotheism that innately accompanies human beings from birth to death.

In fact, people have different levels of faith and different understandings of monotheism, and this is obvious in the Noble Tradition reported from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), as he was asked: O Messenger of Allah! Jesus, the son of Mary, (PBUH) was seen walking on water. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

"If his faith increased, he would walk on air"[1].

Moreover, the Almighty Allah says about Ibrahim (PBUH) in the Noble Quran:

(And thus did We show Ibrahim the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and that he might be of those who are sure)[2].

Therefore, we can notice that the concept of monotheism to Lady Zainab (PBUH) ascended to that same level that the Noble Quran and the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) talked about, and this is because Lady Zainab (PBUH) saw the beauty of the Kingdom with the "assured sight" and realized that this beauty and majesty cannot be arisen but from the Most Magnificent that bestowed His beauty upon this universe.

1 Mostadrak Al-Wasael, Al-Nouri, v11, p198.
2 6.75

Consequently, according to Lady Zainab (PBUH), everything in this world has its own beauty that is in one way or another derived from the beauty of the Most Gracious and the Most Beautiful. Hence, life is as beautiful as death and prosperity is as graceful as adversity although many people might not accept this concept, as they do not see any beauty in illness or poverty.

The difference here is that Lady Zainab (PBUH) looked at the essence of things and that they are qualities made by the Almighty Allah, and this alone is beautiful, because again everything from the Most Magnificent is magnificent be it health or illness, prosperity or adversity.

In addition to that, the Almighty Allah only chooses beautiful things for His servants, and therefore, this selection and preference is beautiful because it is made by the Most Beautiful. This is the level of true believers as they correlate between the concept of beauty and the concept of monotheism, in the sense that believing in Allah, to them, is in a direct relation with perceiving beauty in everything in world.

The daughter of Imam Ali (PBUT), as a true believer, realized this correlation which was also emphasized by the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) when he was asked about the significance of:

"Allah is beautiful and loves beauty"[1].

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said in reply:

"He is the One on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten".

Al-Fakhr Al-Razi commented on this Noble Tradition saying: "This is because if He was not the One and the Only, the counterpart would possibly take His place, therefore, the Chapter Al-Tawhid (monotheism) is also named Al-Jamaal (beauty)"[2].

Lady Zainab (PBUH) reached the realization that Allah is the One with no partner, for that reason when Bin Ziyad asked her: "How do

1 Sheikh Al-Kolaini, Al-Kafi – May God bless his soul, v6, p438. Wasael Al-Shi'a, v4, p455. Irshad Al-Azhan, 'Allama Al-Hilli, v1, p57. Mostanad Al-Shi'a, Al-Mohaqqiq Al-Naraqi, v4, p372. Nail Al-Atwar, Al-Shokani, v2, p108. Mosnad Ahmad, v1, p399. Sahih Moslim, v1, p65, Section: To die and associate no partners with God.

2 Tafsir Al-Razi, v32, p176.

you see what God did to your brother and your household?"

Lady Zainab (PBUH) said:

> *"I see nothing but beauty. God foreordained for them to be killed so they advanced to meet their fate. God will bring you and them together so that you dispute and quarrel and you will see who is to overcome"*[1].

These words drew a beautiful image for humanity over ages so that every person could find his or her own way of living life with certainty and faith in the unseen and the Last Day.

(And all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds)[2].

1 Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, v45, p116.
2 37.182

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